

Bitter Sweet

\$1.50

Vol. Eight, No. Seven

May, 1985



The Connecticut River's History
The Flowers of May • Mothers' Days
Marine Artist Earle Barlow
Boothbay Author Mary Calvert
Lighthouses in Fact & Fiction



THE FLAVOR OF
NORTHCOUNTRY LIVING





Ayah

letters to the editor



THE BRIDGE

I believe your Feb. and March "Can You Place It" photo is of Goodrich Falls at Jackson, N.H. and the old covered bridge there, now long gone. Am I right?

A BitterSweet Fan from the Beginning!

*Polly Lutte
Fryeburg, ME*

Ed. Note: *The reader is right, and her answer reached us before the deadline, so she wins a free subscription.*

A NEIGHBOR

Thank you.

My sister-in-law, Audrey Linke (Conn.) who has contributed to BitterSweet introduced me to your delightful magazine. I really enjoy the outstanding photography and articles. Your magazine exudes such a warm, neighborly feeling!

*Elizabeth Linke
Rangeley, ME*

A FRIEND

I was in Tallahassee, Florida several weeks ago and saw the BitterSweet magazine. I was so surprised to find a letter written to you was (from) a relative of mine, Dorothy Woodbury. Also found a letter from Carlton Fuller; we went to school together. It brought back fond memories.

My father Ernest Odell had a grocery business that he ran for 50 years; and

then I bought it out and ran it for 15 years, then moved to Florida.

I had a relative Diah Sweet that ran a grocery store in Strong, Maine, maybe you remember, but then you may be too young and not dry behind the ears to remember.

I have been back twice since I left Maine and how it has changed. I guess that if you are there to see it day by day you don't realize what a change.

I have subscribed to your magazine. You have done a wonderful job in the 8 years that you have been in business and may you have many more.

*Leon Odell
Hollywood, FL*

ATTENTION: Young Authors BitterSweet's Annual Young People's Writing Contest is here.

Deadline: June 15th.

Rules: Poetry, Fiction or Essays may be submitted. Only one entry per student (ages 14-20). Entries *must be typed* on 8 1/2 x 11 paper and must include name, address, school, and grade completed to be eligible.

Entries cannot be returned.

Send to:

P.O. Box 266, Cornish, ME 04020.

Attn: BitterSweet Writing Contest.

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BitterSweet (ISSN 0742-1486) is published monthly by BitterSweet, Inc., Woodville, FL 32362, with business and editorial offices at The Cornish Country Inn, Main St., Cornish, ME 04020. Phone (207) 625-3975.

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Single copy rate is \$1.50. Subscription rates are \$15.00 for one year (twelve issues) and \$28.80 for two years (twenty-four issues) in the United States. For foreign addresses, \$21.00 for one year and \$36.00 for two years. Bulk postage paid at Lewiston, ME 04240. Address subscription requests, questions and changes of address (USPS form 3579) to Subscriptions, BitterSweet, P.O. Box 266, Cornish, ME 04020.

We encourage editorial submissions. Please send all submissions to The Editor, BitterSweet, P.O. Box 266, Cornish, ME 04020. BitterSweet will not be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, transparencies, artwork, and other submissions unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage affixed.

Printed in the United States by Twin City Printery, Lewiston, Maine. Typesetting in Garamond type by Western Maine Graphics, Oxford, Maine.

The Library of Congress of the United States is permitted to make this publication available, upon request, to the visually impaired in either Braille or talking book form.

Cross Roads

BitterSweet

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Can You Place It?

*If you know the location
of any photograph seen on this page,
write to us at P.O. Box 266, Cornish, ME 04020.*



*The location at left
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BitterSweet Views for May

The view this month ought to be sweet—spring, blossoms, emerging visions. Instead, I'm afraid it is bitter and tragic.

In our community, another child is dead. He was only sixteen.

I didn't know him well. He was a bagger at the supermarket where I shop. I suppose many of us knew him by sight if not by name. He seemed a good boy—earnest, shy, likeable. Friendly.

"Do you remember me?" he asked me at the check-out counter only a few weeks ago. And I did. I remembered last spring, at a school-community musical production, how patiently he stood to be painted with dark body make-up.

He didn't seem like the kind of boy who'd be interested in acting. He wasn't a big "wheel," he wasn't a dramatic person, an intellectual, or even a show-off. I don't think he was a shining light in music. In fact, I believe he was first a stage assistant. Just an ordinary boy.

Then quietly, without fuss, he stepped into a vacated part. It wasn't a big part, not a speaking role in "The King And I." But there was something extraordinary about the way he learned to dance as a Siamese; something sweet about the way he stood shivering for the make-up which turned his arms and chest, face and legs chocolate brown; something endearing about the way he came in, worked on the stage, ran errands for people, then put on a costume and a painful hairpiece, night after night. Just for a quiet little part in a huge cast.

I remember him. You get to know people fairly well when you're involved in the production of a play. There's a closeness—a proximity if nothing else—as you create a new persona for them with sponges and make-up, or as you pin their costume, or comb their hair, or interact on stage. You may never see them again, but the warmth remains in the memory.

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SALES OPPORTUNITIES

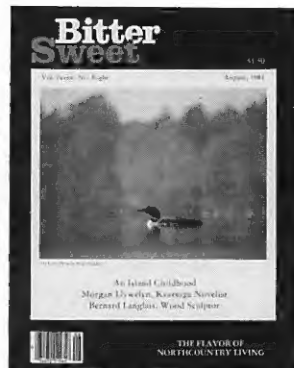
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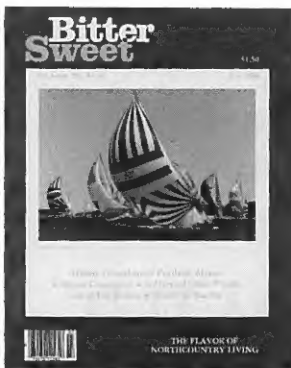
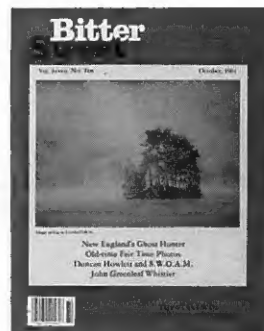
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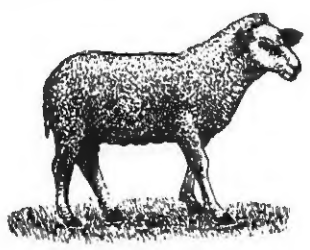
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... BitterSweet Views

I watched this young man begin to blossom. He talked to me at the supermarket about the weather, the people we both knew, and what he planned to do in the future.

And now, for him, there is no future.

This is the heartbreaking thing. He was only sixteen, but he is dead. There was a car accident; the driver was young. They had been at a party and they had been driving too fast. At his memorial service, this boy's mother asked his friends not to drink and drive.

It makes me angry. Every spring, when it's time for fresh faces and minds to emerge from school, we begin another season of carnage. It was happening twenty years ago, when I was in school. My friends died the same way. Why?

These facts are certain. Drinking is rebellion—a perception of "grown-up" behavior. Drinking is escape from situations people cannot handle. Drinking is "social." Drinking is suicide—slow death of the health, mind and spirit; quick death in flaming crashes.

I don't know the solution. I hope that we "adults" will stop modelling the behavior that kills these kids, but I know we won't. I want us to learn to listen to and love our children instead of abusing them and ignoring them.

I know that, as a parent of two teenagers, I will continue to say "no" to where they can go and with whom. I hope that they will reject the self-destructive behavior of both their peers and adults.

In our school system (Oxford Hills in Maine), the young people have become involved. Project Graduation, an all-night, chemical-free party has become popular, and the local organizing students have gone on local television and to national conventions to explain how it works.

I support and applaud their efforts, but I realize it is still only *one* night. The night before and the night after there will still be teenagers drinking and driving in our towns. Project Graduation focuses attention on the problem, but it is not the whole solution. Its organizers know that.

The issue here, I think, is self-esteem. The choices, we must remember, are ultimately the children's. They must learn from the wreckage and the tears. They must learn to choose to cherish themselves.

A beautiful sixteen-year-old boy is dead. The reasons don't matter as much as the waste. If he made such an impression on me in this casual a relationship, imagine what he could have done with the rest of his life.

It's spring. Cherish.

Nancy Marcotte

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Photos by Martinus Ader

MAINLAND SOIL

Historical Fiction by Elinor De Wire

Amanda's fingers tightened on the railing of the windy catwalk. In the distance, a small boat pitched dangerously in the cold sea, disappearing in each wave trough and reappearing on its crest. She shaded her eyes from the afternoon sun and followed its slow progress toward Mount Desert Rock. The wool-capped heads of her two young sons and the heaving form of her husband, as he fought the stubborn oars, took shape amid the dory's heavy barrels.

It had been three weeks since Isaac and the boys left for the mainland. With only her infant son, Michael, a gray, striped cat, and Mount Desert's seabirds for company, Amanda had diligently cared for the light. Precious food and supplies had dwindled until cornmeal cakes and fish became the daily menu, but Amanda had

managed. As she watched her husband's steady, labored rowing, a multitude of recipes began to emerge from the dory's barrels.

Amanda climbed down the lighthouse stairway slowly and carefully. Her swollen abdomen obscured her view of the steps, and Michael's urgent cries echoed up the stairway from his makeshift, wooden playpen—an empty crate in the base of the tower. Amanda rescued the unhappy infant and hurried toward the boatslip. As she zigzagged her way down the ramp to the sea, the droning of Isaac's chanty carried over the water.

"Mama, we have a surprise for you!" her sons shouted across the frothy surf.

Amanda blushed, knowing Isaac had found some inexpensive trifle ashore to color her gray world. Last

On a warm, clear day in summer, a ship passed near Mount Desert Rock, and its men came on deck to marvel at the explosion of color amid the dismal boulders. They saw miraculous dabs of beauty peeking out from granite crevices where, before, there had only been the gray-green of rock and sea. They heard the laughter of children and smelled bread baking. A freshly hung wash danced on the clothesline with wild abandon, and above it all, a lantern gleamed with spotless clarity, reflecting the midday sun as if its beam were lit.

trip to the mainland, it had been a roll of bright wallpaper that covered only half of the east kitchen wall. Before that, it was a jar of cloves to mask the damp, salty smell of her pantry. She would scold him for his foolish purchase, but devour the love it symbolized, for no one felt her hardship as painfully as Isaac.

When a lull came in the waves, Isaac maneuvered the dory into its slip. He lifted the boys onto the ramp above, then hurriedly rolled the dory into the boathouse. The job had to be done quickly, or the sea would claim a share. Once secured, the boat's heavy cargo of barrels was hoisted onto the ramp and the barn-like doors of the boathouse were closed.

Isaac climbed the ramp's zigzag path to the rock plateau where Amanda and the boys waited. Sweat glistened over his brow, though the spring air was chilly, and his expression was stern. It faded to a gentle smile as Amanda brushed her lips over his salty mustache and fished for the mail inside his shirt.

He embraced her and moved his hand over the hard swell of her stomach. Her hands were puffy, fumbling with the letters, and Isaac

noticed the laces of her shoes had been loosened. He had not meant to be gone two weeks. Rough seas had set in only the day after his arrival on the mainland. Each night he had looked longingly to the east awaiting the appearance of a distant beam of light from the rock. It had been more than a guardian of seamen then. It was to Isaac a message—a signal that Amanda was well.

"Your Aunt Lydia will be out in June to help with 'Little Elizabeth'," he teased, knowing how Amanda hoped this child would be a daughter. "Captain Stuart said he'd bring her out on his way to Cape Sable."

Amanda nodded. She was relieved to know there would be help this time, but, as all things in her life, it hinged on the weather. Her sister had planned to come to the rock two years earlier when Michael was born, but the sea had forbidden it. In a February blizzard, with waves breaching the island, Isaac had kept a faithful vigil over both the tower and Amanda. Michael's first cries were drowned by the howl of wind and crash of sea, but Amanda recalled that it had been a happy moment.

"I'll get food on the table while you and the boys wash," she said,

pressing the windblown heads of her two young sons against her face. "You must tell me all that you saw on the mainland. Are the flowers up yet, or the trees in bloom? I always loved to see them every spring."

Timothy and Daniel exchanged weary glances. They saw nothing beautiful on the mainland and tired of their mother's preoccupation with it. For them, it was a frightening place—a noisy, sprawling world of alien faces, unfamiliar sounds, and strange odors. It lacked the quiet, gray security of Mount Desert Rock. It was artificial and complicated. They had never understood their mother's love for it.

Her worn skirt billowed in the wind as she ran to prepare the meal. They watched her with concern, for she looked as if she might stumble under the weight of her ungainly waist. Timothy and Daniel wondered what they should tell her about the mainland. Would she want to hear? Their father had listened, but he was different. He was like the tower—tall and strong and secure, and firmly anchored in Mount Desert Rock.

"I still don't see what's so special about the surprise we brought her. I'm not sure she'll like it," Timothy



told his father.

Isaac thought of the simple gift he had brought Amanda. It had cost him nothing more than a few hours of toil in Captain Stuart's garden, yet it would mean everything to her.

"She'll like the surprise, Tim. Believe me. She'll like it."

The meal Amanda prepared that day was truly a banquet. A brant had providentially slammed into the tower the night before, and Amanda had gathered its broken body for her stew pot. Her best dishes and treasured cross-stitch cloth covered the table. From the depths of the dory's barrels came jellies, pickles, and canned vegetables to color the linen.

"A feast to celebrate the reunion of our family!" she announced as the meal began. "Now, tell me about the mainland."

The family cat rubbed Daniel's leg beneath the table, and his eyes suddenly sparkled.

"Mrs. Stuart has a cat, Mama, but he can't swim and catch fish like Seaweed!"

"Daniel threw him in the pond, and Mrs. Stuart yelled at us," Timothy confessed in low tones. Isaac chuckled, but quickly recovered his sober expression.

"Well...Seaweed is sort of different," Amanda explained. "Tell me about the trees, and the flowers and the busy streets!!"

The children were silent. Isaac spoke, dutifully relating the facts of spring on the mainland he knew his wife longed to hear. When he had adequately described the color of every crocus in Mrs. Stuart's garden, and estimated the power of every fragrant, blossoming tree, Amanda sighed deeply and closed her eyes as if she were seeing and smelling all of it. Five year old Daniel swiped a pickle with his fingers and swallowed it whole as his mother's eyes came open.

"The trees in Captain Stuart's yard lean over the house, Mama," Timothy said. "At night...when it's really dark...their limbs scratch at the windows."

"Like claws!!" added Daniel, shivering at the mention of nights on the mainland.

Amanda wasn't listening. She was thinking how nice it would be to have a tree outside her kitchen window wearing the latest fashion of spring colors.

At dusk, Isaac wound his way to the top of the lighthouse and filled the oil pans of its lamps. The wicks were trimmed and the carcel of the huge lantern weights was turned. A feeble glow twisted through the prisms of the intricate lens and pierced the dark with a powerful beam. Amanda bathed in its radiance as each rotation swept over her kitchen window. It had become a symbol of hope for her—a bright ray that vanquished the dark solitude of Mount Desert Rock.

When Isaac's footsteps sounded outside the kitchen, she poured hot coffee to warm him.

"What news did you bring me from the mainland?" she asked as Isaac settled into his chair by the



woodstove. He stretched his arms high over his head to ease the stiffness that was setting in from the day's long row.

"I didn't bring you any news of the mainland, love."

He twisted a loose tendril of her hair in his fingers. The sea air had stolen its youthful shine, but it was still soft and thick. She sighed wearily as she eased onto his lap and pinched his cheek between her fingers.

"I'm too tired for any nonsense, Isaac. Now tell me all about the mainland."

She had not called it "home," and for that, Isaac was glad. But he knew he would always share her heart with the soil of Maine's interior. She was like the flowers of the mainland—no more meant for the hardships of this rock than their delicate, spring petals.

"No nonsense, love," Isaac repeated. "I brought no news of the mainland because I brought the

mainland itself."

He motioned toward the last barrel resting in the corner of the kitchen.

"It's in there. Open it and see for yourself."

Amanda's eyes flashed from the barrel to Isaac's broad grin.

"You old fool," she chided softly. "What have you spent our money on now? I have need of nothing—not one single thing."

Isaac watched as she fetched the hammer and began prying open the barrel. It was true she really *needed* nothing, but he could think of a hundred things she had sacrificed to live on his barren charge.

The barrel nails screeched painfully as Amanda pried open its lid. She peered into its dark contents, then inhaled deeply as its earthy smell touched her nose. She closed her eyes for a moment and allowed the odor to seep into her memory. An image appeared—a garden with its dirt freshly turned and neat little

rows of flowers and herbs just beginning to sprout.

"Oh, Isaac," she murmured, pushing her hands deep into the barrel's contents. "You did bring the mainland."

The soil was cool and moist. Amanda let it sift through her fingers as if it were gold dust.

"Perhaps you'll need some of these, too," Isaac said.

He withdrew a small envelope from his shirt pocket and inverted it over the kitchen table. Hundreds of tiny seeds rolled in every direction.

"Captain Stuart's wife saved these from her garden last summer. There are some of your favorites—nasturtiums, zinnias, marigolds—and parsley and rosemary from Dunham's store."

Amanda gathered the seeds in a pile and cupped her hands around them. They were small and lifeless, but inside each, as within Amanda's soul, was a will to grow and prosper—



even on a rock as bleak as Mount Desert.

"We'll have the loveliest rock garden in all of New England," Isaac said. "It will probably wash away by next winter, but we can bring out more soil and replant it."

When the first rays of sunlight shot up from the eastern horizon, Isaac extinguished the lamps in the lighthouse and began to polish their sooty globes. Far below, on the jagged rocks, his wife tediously carried buckets of earth and packed it into Mount Desert's time-worn crevices. The tiny seeds were carefully nestled in their stony flowerpots and soaked with precious rainwater from the cistern.

Though Amanda's hands were black and her knees bruised from kneeling on the sharp rocks, she worked tirelessly, and Isaac made no effort to stop her. From the spiraling heights of his luminous charge, he watched the pain of isolation

drain from her. The planting seemed to purge her soul of all bitterness.

On a warm, clear day in summer, a ship passed near Mount Desert Rock, and its men came on deck to marvel at the explosion of color amid the dismal boulders. They saw miraculous dabs of beauty peeking out from granite crevices where, before, there had only been the gray-green of rock and sea. They heard the laughter of children and smelled bread baking. A freshly hung wash danced on the clothesline with wild abandon, and above it all, a lantern gleamed with spotless clarity, reflecting the mid-day sun as if its beam were lit.

The seamen conferred with each other, then nodded in agreement. They, and others like them, would call this place "God's Rock Garden," for surely no human hands could make flowers grow from granite. Something more than a garden was in bloom on Mount Desert Rock.

De Wire writes this historical fiction based on "rock gardens" that bloomed in the 1800's on Boon Island and Saddleback Ledge, as well as Mount Desert Rock. The author lives in Hawaii and has written about lighthouses for Sea Frontiers, American History Illustrated, and other publications.

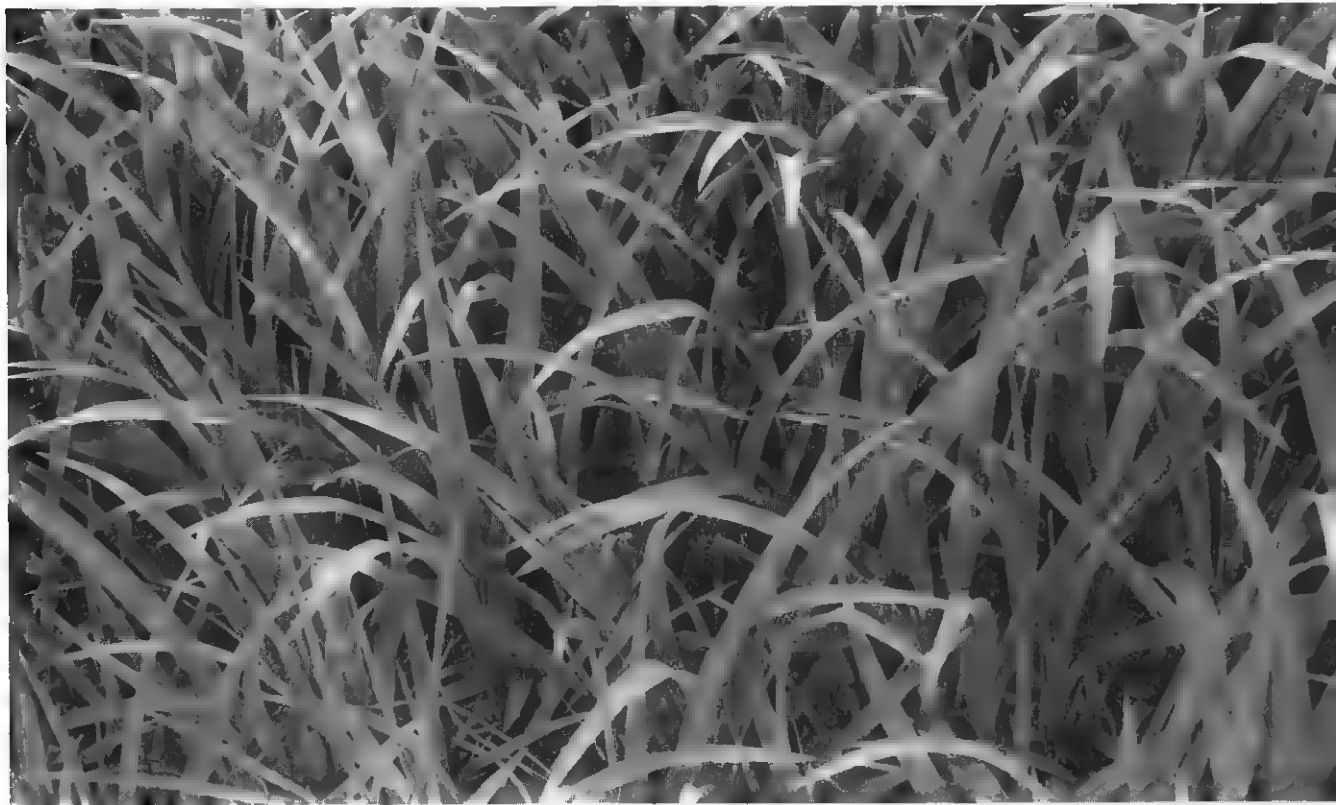
THE MAYQUEEN

The Mayqueen has been chosen
And a fair beauty is she
With her scarlet gown
And her deep blue eyes,
A sight to behold, is she.
Men, women, and children,
Danced merrily round the Maypole
Entwined in its brightly colored flowers,
Yet no flower was as lovely as that
Of the Mayqueen in her scarlet gown.

J.R. Libby
Winslow, ME



Coastal Photos by Martinus Ader

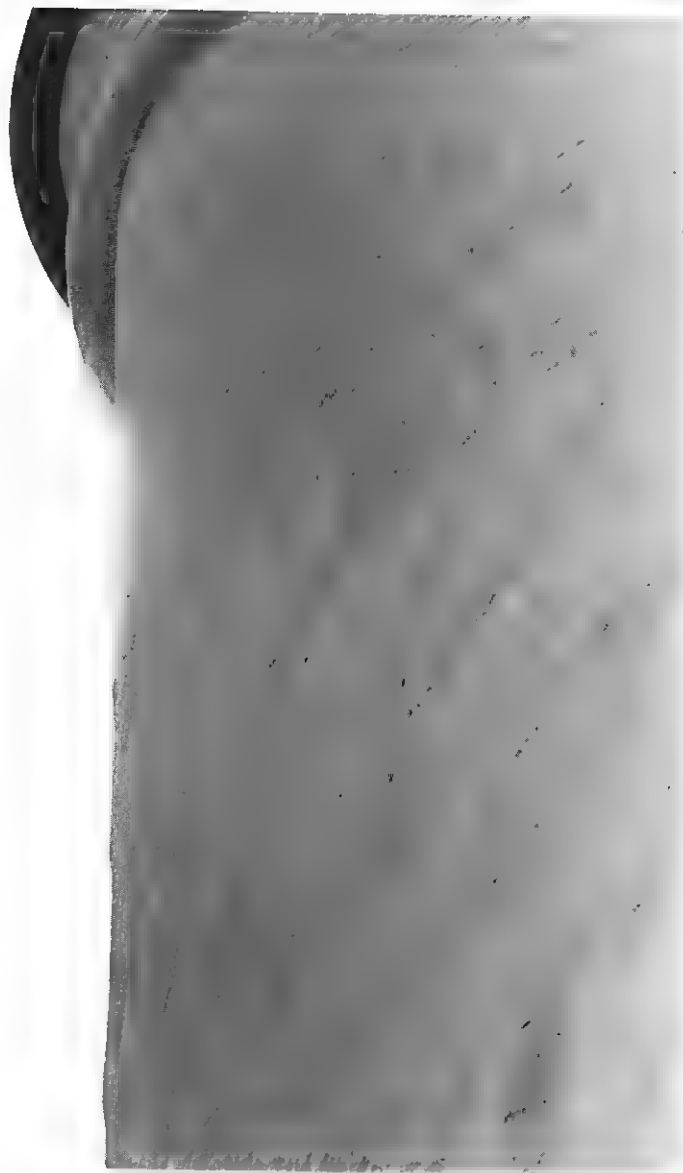


A Beacon by the Soaring Sea

A lighthouse stands erect and still,
On an isolated island hill.
She looks so pretty in the day,
So trim, and white and tall and gay,
While each new breaker foams and rolls,
Crashing itself against the shoals.
She surely makes a gleaming sight,
Beside the breakers wet and white,
Or silhouetted by the sun,
At evening when the day is done,
While winds in fury round her beat,
And throw the ocean at her feet.
She beams her reassuring light,
Into the corners of the night,
And tells all seamen to beware,
Of rocks known to be hidden there,
While waves in darkness far below,
Are dashing wildly to and fro.
She is an absolute delight,
Her tower teaming tall and bright;
And as she stands upon that hill,
An equal part of strength and skill,
A faithful, ancient light is she,
A beacon by the soaring sea.

*Dorothy N. Gross
Oxford, Maine*

Portland Head Light Photos by N. Marcotte



SOME MAINE LIGHTHOUSES

Two Lights:

Properly called Cape Elizabeth Light, since only one light still glows there, it is the site of the construction of a new residence.

Cape Neddick Light:

Located off the coast at York, this small Coast Guard light is the original lamp and living quarters authorized by President Rutherford B. Hayes in the 1870's.



Portland Head Light:

President George Washington authorized the construction of this, the oldest of Maine's lighthouses. It was built in 1791 to guard the entrance to Portland Harbor. It occupies a scenic location in South Portland, near ruins and a picnic area.

Halfway Rock Light:

Halfway between Portland Head and Seguin Light, this automated beacon sweeps Casco Bay from its ledge perch.

Seguin Light:

A stone tower just south of the mouth of the Kennebec River, it was commissioned in 1795.

Perkins Island Light:

On the east side of the Kennebec River, this octagonal, shingled light is now automated. It was featured in *BitterSweet* in *August of 1984*. Towers of similar construction can be found at Squirrel Point (Arrowsic Island) Doubling Point Light near Bath.

Monhegan Island Light:

A small stone tower, this beacon has witnessed a lot of history on this island ten miles off Port Clyde. Today the island is a vacation spot, and artist's colony (it's the summer home of Jamie Wyeth), and the location of the start of a sailboat race each summer.

Pemaquid Point Light:

Another scenic light for artists and photographers, this Fisherman's Museum and automated light was built in 1827.

Owls Head Light:

The site of a Penobscot Indian raid in 1757, Owls Head overlooks the harbors of Thomaston and Rockland. The 1825 light here is a Coast Guard station.

Crotch Island Light:

Near Deer Island, this Coast Guard Light is interestingly solar powered, as is Blue Hill Bay Light.



Isle Au Haut Light:

This island is a part of Acadia National Park, in Frenchman's Bay. You'll find it by ferry from Stonington.

Mount Desert Rock Light:

An isolated and dangerous ledge south of Mt. Desert Island, this rock has been home to the light since 1832. It is now automatic.

Petit Manan Light:

This automatic tower was built in 1817 and is the second highest tower on the coast. It is made of granite.

Bass Harbor Head Light:

Another Mt. Desert light, this one is home to a Coast Guard family.

West Quoddy Head Light:

This rocky ledge is the most eastern point of the United States. A Coast Guard light has been here since the early 1800's. This striped lighthouse is one of the most-photographed on the coast.

There are over 75 lights overlooking the extensive Maine coastline from Kittery to Eastport.

Springing to life among the cone-shaped fir trees, boggy brooks, and small lakes in northern New Hampshire, the *Quonnec Tucque* begins its journey of four hundred and seven miles.

But what is the "Quonnec Tucque?" It is the longest river in New England, today known as the Connecticut. To be sure, though, the Indian name (meaning "long river") was certainly appropriate.

In its infancy, the river's ribbon-like course resembles any other brook or stream, giving no hint of its length or importance. Yet a brief geographical and historical sketch bears out its influence on New England.

Starting with a series of four small lakes called the Connecticut Lakes in Pittsburg, New Hampshire, the "long river" flows through the wilderness to a near-rendezvous with the Canadian border at Beechers Falls, Vermont. Here its west bank begins forming the boundary line of New Hampshire and Vermont. After many years of controversy over which state owned the river, the United States Supreme Court set this boundary. Contrary to popular belief that the river flows between New Hampshire and Vermont, the river actually flows entirely through New Hampshire. Keeping its southerly course, it snakes its way through Massachusetts and Connecticut and empties into Long Island Sound at Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

In song and verse we have heard about such rivers as the Jordan, the Thames, the Potomac, the Swanee, the Hudson. Yet the Connecticut outreaches these by far, and its valley



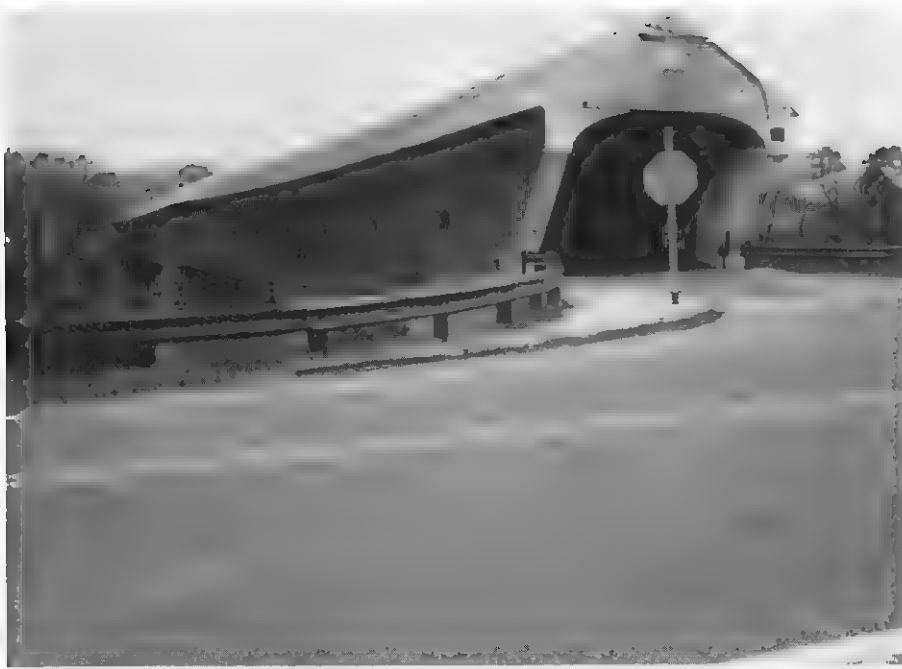
The third Connecticut Lake, birthplace of the river.

From Wilderness To Sound The Connecticut River

by Bernice Barnett



The old covered bridge at Cornish, N.H.



is viewed by many as being the most fertile and beautiful in the country. During the spring run-off, it has often been referred to as the "Nile of New England."

Like most rivers, the Connecticut has its share of beautiful waterfalls. At Newbury, Vermont, there is one of the river's most-photographed bends, called "The Ox-Bow." The saying goes: a man standing in Vermont can shoot a rifle, have the bullet cross New Hampshire and return to Vermont; because the river at this point makes a circuit of four miles but returns to a point within a

half-mile of the place where the curve begins.

In its early days, the river teemed with life. The Atlantic Salmon population was so prolific that, as one source puts it, "a farmer could drive a wagon into the shallow tributaries during the annual spawning run and spear what were then called 'junk fish' with a pitch fork." Another article claims, "At the junction of the West River, near Brattleboro, Vt. was a meeting place of the Squakheag Indians, the name meaning 'salmon-spearing place.' " Shad was also abundant in the Connecticut,

sometimes caught at Northfield, Mass. at a rate of five thousand a day. In fact, fish were so abundant, they were used in fertilizing corn fields.

Early in New England's history, the Connecticut River played an important part in the dramatic process of conveying lumber logs and pulpwood from the northern New Hampshire forests to manufacturing centers. Driving the logs down the river in log drives, hardy crews of "White-water men" risked life and limb in the hazardous work, even into the Twentieth Century.

With the invention of electricity came the ever-increasing need to harness the "long river's" potential. Generating plants sprang up all along the river, making the building of dams necessary. Some of these dams were so high, the salmon and shad could not get over them to return to their spawning grounds. Therefore, for many years, the Connecticut was void of these fish in its upper reaches. (Pollution also took its toll.) In later years, the power companies have constructed fish ladders to encourage the fish to once again seek out their old spawning grounds. A clean-up of the river has also helped.

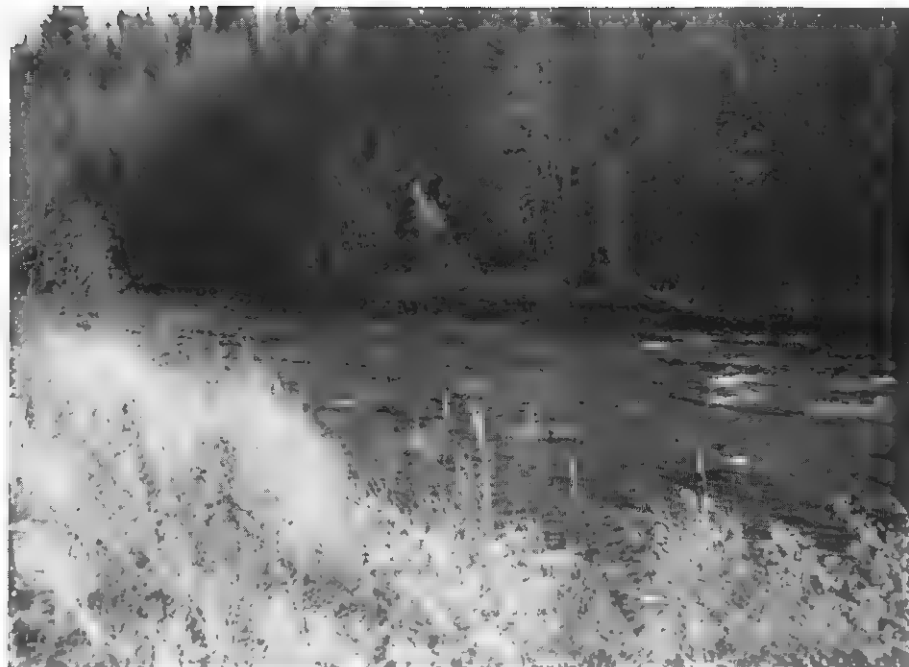
Abundant in history, the Connecticut River Valley can claim many "firsts." In 1724, the first white settlement in Vermont was established near Brattleboro, at Fort Dummer. This fort protected the early settlers from Indian attack.

About thirty years before Robert Fulton won his fame for navigating the Hudson River by steamship, Captain Samuel Morey of Orford, New Hampshire, had experimented with his invention of the steamship, crossing the Connecticut River from Orford to Fairlee, Vt.

Connecting the towns of North Walpole, N.H. and Bellows Falls, Vt., the first bridge to span the Connecticut River at any point was built in 1785. Its 365-ft.-long, lattice-covered bed was financed by Enoch Hale. In 1905, the "old Arch Bridge" was completed in a different location. Unique in its construction, it was the largest arch span in the country, except for the one which crosses the Niagara River. At the time it was built, it was the only long-span arch with a suspended floor in the country. It was deemed unsafe and closed thirteen years ago; on Oct. 27, 1984, dedication ceremonies were held for a "new arch bridge."

The story of the Connecticut River would not be complete without crediting some of the men and women who won acclaim in cultural, educational, and religious pursuits.

Rudyard Kipling married a Brattleboro girl; he once lived at Dummerston, Vt., where he wrote his *Jungle Books*. Lakin Mead, a famous sculptor, and William Morris Hunt, a famous artist, were born in Brattleboro. The renowned Mary Baker Eddy was born near Concord,



N.H. And it was near the headwaters of the Connecticut, in the little town of Concord, Vt., that Samuel Hall founded the first normal school in America in 1823.

Unlike housing developments and condominiums of today, a variety of architecture adds to the beauty of the valley and proclaims the diversity of early times. Travelling through the valley, one can see a round house or barn among the colonials and salt-boxes for which New England is noted. Then, of course, there are the charming covered bridges which many a traveller has marveled at or

tried to capture either on film or with a paint brush. On the other hand, Spanish and Italian villas can be seen on the beautiful terraced hills of Cornish, N.H.

It is easy to see the influence the Connecticut River, its valley and its people have had in the development of New England. From the early days of log drives down to our day of sophisticated lifestyles, the "Quon-nec Tucque" takes its place among the great waterways of America.

Bernice Barnett lives in West Halifax, Vermont.

NEW ENGLAND SPRING

When apple blossoms light the hills
and fervent rain comes down and fills
the thawing streams to gently sing
between the banks of daffodils;

When budding branches pregnant swing
and parent birds begin to wing,
the lonely crocus dares to nod
to brave new sounds of noisy spring.

When seeds awake in fragrant sod
all nature breathes the breath of God
and sings a hymn of mythic mirth
to winter's death on planet Earth.

*Bethany Strong
Amherst, MA*

MY CHOICE

I have seen the midnight sun,
I have seen the glaciers flow,
I have seen hot springs in the Arctic,
Boiling water in a land of snow.

I have seen volcanoes active,
Sending ashes up on high,
I have seen sights of the Northern Lights
Streaking, whirling, through the sky.

I have sailed on many ships,
Seen mysteries of sea and tide,
I have travelled through the West
With its canyons and prairies wide.

I have seen the Sunny South,
With its banana trees and palms,
Travelled through the central states,
With their endless miles of farms.

Now that I am done with travelling
And wish to settle down again,
I'll choose the place that I love most,
That dear old State of Maine.

You can travel this wide world over
But no matter where you roam,
When your travelling days are over
Your thoughts go back to home.

*William Foster
Mexico, Maine*



EQUAL TIME

by Elizabeth Nieuwland

Let's Hear it for the Small Town

I come from a small town, and we do things differently than in the city. We do them more simply, more off the top of our head, and I think more efficiently. Example:

I lost my keys lately, and being in the neighborhood of a large (well, medium) city police facility, I went in to inquire if perhaps some kind soul had found them and had turned them in. Well, beware of any government building that calls itself a "facility," it means that the bureaucrats have been at work. So, anyway, I ascended some steps, went through a courtyard, and came across a receptionist, who informed me *Lost and Found* was on the Second Level. So I went up one of those free-floating staircases past some stained-glass murals, and hit the Second Receptionist. She informed me *Lost and Found* was closed and I should call between "niyun and fo-our" weekdays. Suppressing an urge to ask what would happen if some poor soul was locked out of their house or car and couldn't wait for "niyun to fo-our" weekdays, I thanked her and departed, down

the stairs, past the stained glass and First Receptionist to the outside world. From the looks of the place nothing as mundane as my keys would be kept there. I had visions of *Lost and Found* being full of such articles as the Hope Diamond, the Crown Jewels of England, or the Mona Lisa.

So, anyway, when I got home, I went to my police station. A police-person brought out an old cigar box, looked inside, and said Sorry, Lady.

Well, so I go in a city hardware store and ask for some furnace filters. And the clerk says what size? So I say the square ones. And he says what size square ones, we have dozens. So I say I don't know and go home.

So, anyway, I go in my five-and-ten, and ask for the square filters, as opposed to the rectangular ones. The clerk sells me two square ones and I put them in my furnace and that's it.

I know a city library that has conference rooms and exhibits and Xerox's and computers but hardly any books. So, I go in a small town library and it's full of books, including the Bobbsey Twins.

I rest my case. Now if I could remember what I did with my keys.

Mrs. Nieuwland lives at Old Orchard Beach.



THE MEET

by Stephen J. McCurdy

Donny Egan was the best distance runner I had ever seen. Two years ago, after he had won the State Cross Country crown for Whitney High, one writer from the local paper headlined him as "Sophomore Sensation Shatters Mark." I managed to finish seventh in that race for the same team. The next season we finished first and third, respectively; and both years our team was the state winner.

Donny always kept to himself, yet I was used to thinking of him as a friend. We had for the past three years covered a lot of ground—Donny always the single, way-out-front easy winner. I was usually able to manage good second-places behind him. The thought of catching him had long since dissipated and I simply became second man, both for the team and in competition.

He was also somewhat superstitious; before every race he would snap a talisman around his neck—a small scroll-like packet, the contents of which he had never revealed.

This past season brought to our own Whitney High team a transfer student, who, we discovered, was a natural runner; and for a sophomore, he seemed to have understanding beyond his years. Like Donny, Mark Stone was aloof, though not cold, and exuded a quiet, dignified self-confidence that was pleasing to our teammates. He generated an air of mystery, and, since the season began, had improved quickly and steadily—finishing each meet closer to me and to Donny.

Finally, during the County Championship, with Donny a fifty-yard easy winner, the transfer Mark blitzed past me and actually closed ground on Donny Egan. Though an opponent also passed me in that home-stretch, our team won handily as our fourth and fifth men, the Collins twins, finished strong. With the State Championship meet coming up the following week, our team was ready for Coach Barry Fox's pep-talk on the mini-bus as we returned to Whitney.

There was no pep-talk. Coach Fox, last to board, simply stood looking at his tired but happy team for a long time. Then he took the driver's seat and we began our trip home in a light rain. About ten minutes of quiet had gone by in the hour-long ride when Coach Fox broke into a *basso-profundo* refrain of "Over the Rainbow." Quitting that, he half-turned and said, "You boys know, don't you, that there isn't anything you can't do?"

It was a nice drive home. Everyone liked our coach. We knew he cared about the important things in life and he had an affable way of drawing out the best in each of us. Yes, everyone liked the coach.



At Monday afternoon practice, our team gathered around Coach Fox. Looking squarely at our leader, Donny Egan, he said, "No team or individual has ever won three state titles in this state's history." Then

he looked at Mark, who was crouching on one knee and studying the ground with a twig. Coach went on: "No one."

Shifting his gaze to me, he asked, "How are you doing, Stevie? Best 'rabbit' I ever coached. Who ever heard of a rabbit closing in on the hounds?" And to the twins, who were juniors, "Once you guys get running, you could run all day long. Next weekend at Two Falls, I want you to set the pace—I want you out front early. My theory is that both of you can move up with improved times if you go out early."

Addressing the team as a unit, he continued, "This is my last year as coach. This team is the finest I have ever seen. I want to thank you for letting me be a part of cross country at Whitney High. It's been both a pleasure and an honor. You're a fine group of young men and I'll never forget my experience here."

I spoke up immediately. "Where are you going, coach? What will you be doing?"

"I've been offered a teaching position at State University. It's a life-long dream, Stevie; I'll be an instructor in Philosophy."

Don quipped sullenly at Coach Fox, "That's what you've been ever since I first met you. Will you coach up there, too?"

"Oh, I may get my hand in there after a while, Donny, but for right now, let's get into our workout."

We worked easily through the next few afternoons with nothing but the state meet on our minds and



I smiled and felt a warm thrill, thinking, "The state meet, the coach's last, and his team can finish first five."

knew each other's desire to give that title trophy to Coach Fox. On Thursday we stretched our distance to two miles without serious effort, just to maintain our looseness.

After Friday's no-practice, Saturday morning found the Whitney High Terriers enroute to Two Falls for the State Championship Meet with Coach Fox's philosophy coming at us in the form of the now-familiar "Over the Rainbow."

The Two Falls course was almost as difficult as steeplechase in places. Our course at Whitney was second in degree of difficulty only to this one. I always felt a kind of quiet excitement or controlled anxiety borne of eagerness before all meets and this time there seemed to be magic in the air.

Our team took its position at the starting line, with Donny and our new transfer, Mark, up front, and the twins and me poised behind. We were ready when the gun went off—fighting for position in the horde of those who love to run.

The twins and I shot out in front of Donny and Mark, who were not to be seen for a long time. The two-and-a-half mile course was being ripped apart by a sea of many-colored jerseys; and by the time we hit the woods, I had just gone by the twins and took the lead, stretching and working for distance between the following pack and me. I was waiting for Donny. I felt good.

With the two-mile mark coming up, I felt the charging, driving Donny Egan gaining and he eased by and took command out front the way he had always done it.

Yes, the way he had always done it ...but something was different—he had lost a shoe and his foot was covered with blood. Keeping my pace, I watched him still moving out and away when suddenly, quietly, Mark Stone was beside me. Then, softly, "The twins are right behind us . . ." And as he moved, closing strongly on Donny, I smiled and felt a warm thrill, thinking, "The state meet, the coach's last, and his team can finish first five."

I turned my head back and yelled to the twins, "Come on, guys, for the Gipper!" Then I continued, renewed, until a strange thing met my eyes: thirty yards ahead, Mark was stooping, and pawing through a muddy puddle as Donny was blazing out the finish. Mark straightened himself before I reached him and, waiting, aligned his stride with mine. We finished hand-in-hand in second place.

As we crossed the finish line, we turned to greet the twins, also hand-in-hand; it was over. We listened to the thundering stampede beginning to pour across the finish line, all of us received into a roped-off area shaped like a funnel.

It was late afternoon when our jubilant and victorious team boarded the mini-bus. The coach got on last

as usual, and everyone cheered. His smile was teary-eyed and he slumped into the driver's seat, holding the individual and team trophies.

"Mark," the man said, "Donny told me what you did out there. Not bad for a sophomore—and he wants you to have this trophy."

Donny smiled broadly and warmly at Mark, saying, "I think you're the only man who could've won three crowns. Thanks, Mark. This is yours now, too; you were the one who picked it up." He handed the muddy scroll-like talisman to Mark.

"Here, please take it, it's got your name written all over it. Besides, I've outgrown it and you're only a sophomore. You might need it next year. The twins were closing on us."

Then we began moving along with Coach Fox, whistling this time, the usual tune, as Mark gingerly unrolled the scroll.

He showed it to us. It was a newspaper headline rolled up which read: "Sophomore Sensation Shatters Mark." And on the inside of the scroll itself was a small, delicate, faded rainbow, beneath which was carefully penned: "You boys know, don't you, that there isn't anything you can't do?"

The ride home was peaceful—and, very quietly, we were growing up.

Stephen J. McCurdy lives in Gorham, Maine.

Peanuts, Cheese & Hair Cuts



When Mother thought my hair was long enough to cut, she called in George-Henry Goodwin to do the job. He was a small man with a giant mustache and a gentle manner. One leg was considerably shorter than the other, which gave him a jaunty limp. All of which attributes did little to qualify him as a barber, so after a few of his visits, Mother told Father that she thought she could do a better job with one of her mixing bowls and her pinking shears. So the following Sunday, Father took me to Rufus Small's Barber Shop in East Hiram. With a firm grip on my right hand he ushered me into the semi-darkness of the room. As it was Sunday, the shades were all drawn as required by the "Blue Laws" of that time.

The air was heavy with the scent of roasting peanuts and the smell of cinnamon cigars. A half-dozen "Loaf-

Rufus Small of Hiram *by Red Cotton*

ers," enthroned on upturned nail kegs scattered about the room, were carrying on a muted conversation.

Advised of my needs, Rufus seized a wooden box which he placed in the barber chair. With a jerk of his thumb he said, briskly: "Jump right up there on that box, young feller."

Above: The tall man with derby hat is Rufus Small. The man in the middle is Nelson (Scrub) Sanborn. The short man on the end is William (Beany) Trafton.

A glance at my father showed no sign of compassion, so with great reluctance I obeyed.

Picking up comb and scissors, Rufus advised me: "Now, young feller, don't move a muscle."

I quickly discovered that the clipping and snipping of a professional was a big improvement over George-Henry's painful antics and I relaxed. I was rewarded by a sharp jab in the pit of my stomach with the end of the comb. "All right, now young feller, you just keep looking down there."

In no time at all he had doused my head with bay rum and applied the comb. He set me down to the floor and admired his work. "There now, young feller, you look just like your father." He thrust a generous portion of peanuts, warm from the roaster, into my hand, pocketed the quarter Father gave him and said loudly, "Next."

Ever after, down through the many years since that day, I have always associated the smell of roasting peanuts with Rufus Small.

At that time Rufus Small was widely known in southwestern Maine as a manufacturer of cigars: The Hally Rollins, The Cinnamon, and the Small's Special. In Hiram he was an institution. I remember him as a tall man of middle age, willow slim and so straight that he seemed to incline backward as he walked. Mother insisted he wore corsets. He was seldom seen without his black derby hat and he always wore a vest, even in the heat of summer.

His shop was a combination barber shop, grocery store, and club house.

A bachelor with no family of his own, he nevertheless loved small children. On the street he rewarded every child he met with a handful of peanuts or a stick of licorice.

Rufus took great pride in being self-educated, often stating that he had received only three days of schooling in his whole life. But he seemed able to read after a fashion and to solve problems like "twenty four cans of peas at two dollars a dozen." He could also determine the correct mark-up to apply for a fair profit. He did, however, make a statement one day which would give some cause to wonder. The A & P had opened a store in Cornish and his friends were discussing their prices for his benefit. He said, "Of course we all know them fellers sell everything less than their cost and show a good profit, too. Of course you know they do a big business."

He firmly refused to sell the last one of any item on his shelves, a fact thought very strange by most people. But one who has run a store can understand: confronted with several blank spots on shelves, how can one tell just what once occupied each spot? The answer to that is a stock list, but Rufus' writing was a loosely arranged scrawl and it was commonly

thought that he couldn't read it himself!

Rufus was a checker player of championship quality—a checker game was in progress in his store almost perpetually. His toughest opponent was "Scrub" Sanborn, deer hunter; and his cheering section consisted of Charley Bean, the ox trainer, and "Beany" Trafton, retired. Scrub's supporters were any bystanders who wished to make Rufus angry. Rufus wanted absolute silence. He seldom got it.

The clubby atmosphere of the store was not always serene. Rufus was in the habit of dealing out peanuts at the rate of one cent a handful, which usually meant about six peanuts. Charley Bean, who was possessed of a truly gargantuan hand, would wait until Rufus was tied up at the barber chair when he would throw a cent on the counter, plunge his big hand into the peanut can, and come up fully loaded. He would say, "Here is a cent on the counter, Rufe. I got a handful of peanuts." Rufus soon became aware that he was getting the short end of the deal and the next time it occurred he sprang forward, razor in hand, shouting, "You get away from there, Bean. I'll dish out the peanuts."

Another time Albert Sanborn was in the barber chair and, knowing that Al's temper was volatile and his patience span brief, the boys on the kegs went to work on him.

At the first snip of the scissors, someone said, "Rufe, I want a nickle's worth of peanuts." That was too big a sale to lose, so Rufus served him. After a few more snips, another ordered a portion of peanuts. By the fourth or fifth such occurrence, Albert was squirming about so much in the chair that Rufus didn't dare to continue. He turned and bellowed at the top of his voice, "Not another peanut 'til this man is done."

In the summer Rufus dispensed scrumptious lemonade which he

made in the back room to conceal his method from prying eyes. It sold for five cents a glass and at every sale he would serve himself a small portion and drink it down. Nothing exists like it today; the secret died with him like those of Michaelangelo and Stradivarius.

His shelves displayed a large variety of patent medicine: Peruna, Swamp Root, Atwood's Bitters, and Lydia Pinkham's. After several days of feeling "kind of poorly," he took a water glass and poured a small portion from each kind on the shelves, topped it off with lemonade and drank it down, saying, "One of them things sure ought to hit it!"

The reason that he survived this "shotgun" treatment is probably due to the fact that the patent medicines of that time were basically colored water. The makers were very cozy about listing their ingredients, as is required today. Rufus carried one medicine in stock of which he said the ingredients had been revealed to him by the manufacturer: "Scorpion hooves, eagle talons, bat wings, dragon blood and one more thing which if left out spoiled the whole business." That was Pratt Sanborn's Salve.

One day Rufus took a flyer in cheese. He bought 50 forty-pound wheels of aged Vermont cheddar which he stored in his cellar. The passage of time greatly increased its bite as well as its aroma. One customer remarked that he didn't see how anything that stunk so bad could taste so good.

Leslie Thompson, who spent his summers in Maine and his winters in Florida, bought a whole wheel and took it south with him. A month or so later someone came in the store and said: "I just got word from Florida that poor old Leslie has passed away."

Rufus exclaimed, "There, by God, I knew I shouldn't have sold him a whole wheel of that cheese." There-

after, with every sale he gave the warning: "Be careful not to eat too much at one time. It has already killed one man!"

A major part of Rufus' income came from his wholesale cigar business. His brother Elmer toiled many hours a day in the back room and when sufficient cigars had been made, boxed and cured, he would take over the store while Rufus loaded his wagon and peddled his cigars all over southwestern Maine.

In his later years he gave up traveling and his cigar business went by the board. A little later he gave up his barbering and his store became principally a hang-out for those who gathered there in the evenings to spend their time playing checkers, eating his peanuts and cheese, and telling each other tales both long and short. Eventually ill health forced him to give up the store and in a short time we learned that he had

left us on "the last long journey." A strange and wonderful man, loved by many, respected by all, and hated by no one.

On a May Sunday not long ago, I was in the Village Cemetery doing a little work on the family lot in preparation for Memorial Day. Just across Main Street from the cemetery Rufus' store still stands, now converted to a residence.

It must have been the strong May sun shining down on a pate much more sparsely decorated than when Rufus first clipped it. The pervasive odor of lilacs became the odor of cinnamon cigars and the leaves beneath them crackling as I stepped on them became the crunch of peanut shells trampled on the wooden floor. The gentle breeze of Spring rustling the evergreens became the murmur of the voices of Scrub and Jim and Squid, Charley Bean and Beany Traf-ton; and a voice seemed to whisper

in my ear, "There now, young feller, you look just like your father."

The soft pealing of the bell on the nearby Methodist church as it sounded its call to worship shattered the spell. It seemed to say, "All gone...all gone...all gone." A sudden gust of wind blew dust into my eyes. It must have been that. Anyway I had to get my handkerchief and wipe them.

On the way home I was seized by a crazy impulse. I went into the store and got a bag of peanuts roasted in the shell and encased in cellophane.

Once at home, I tasted one. I shelled the rest and fed them, one by one, to my little dog. He loved them! Poor old fellow, he had never tasted Rufus' peanuts!

Raymond "Red" Cotton is the proprietor of a quintessential general store and a regular writer for BitterSweet.

Photo below by Sara Gallant





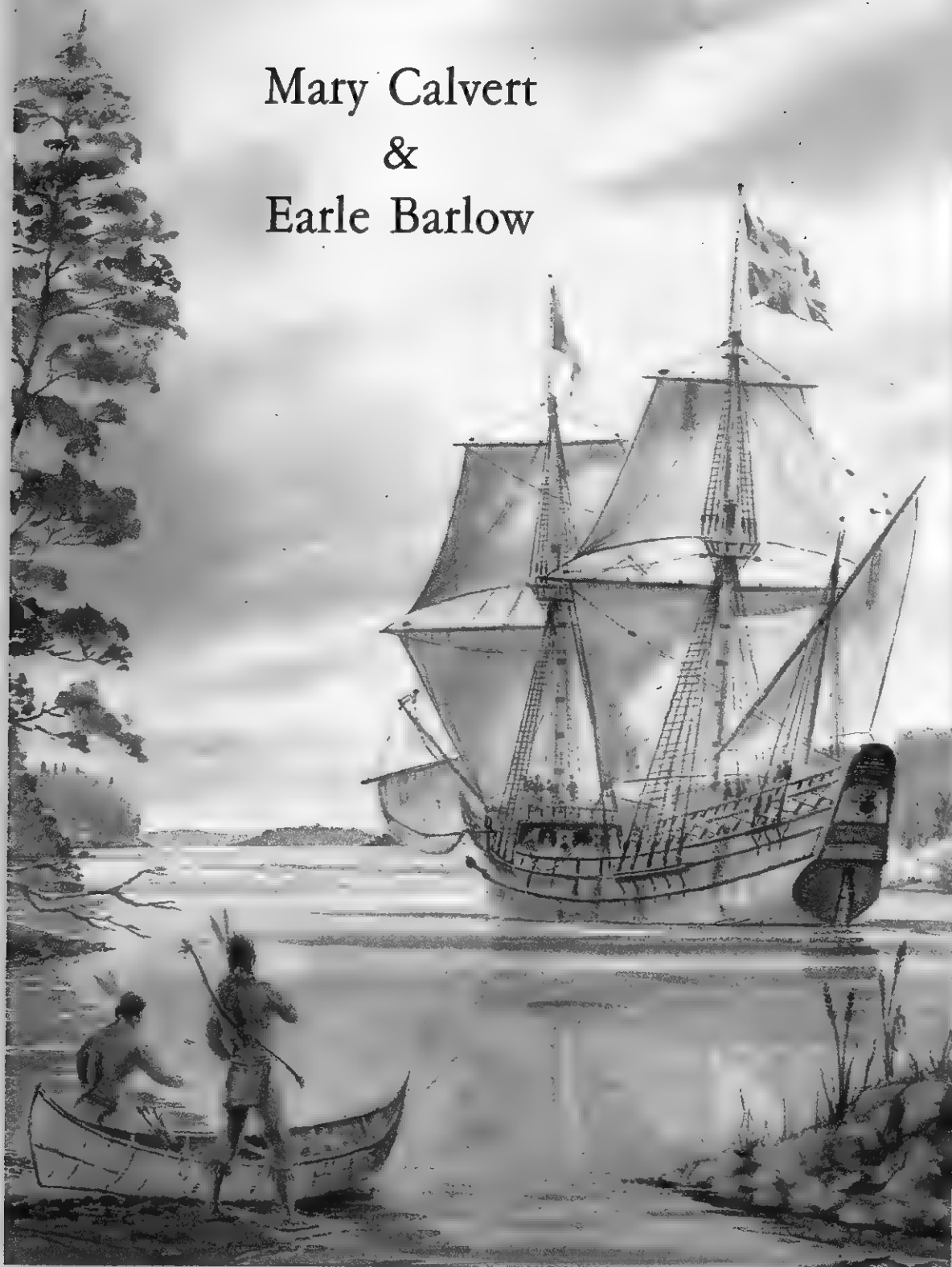
Top, apple blossoms & Kearsarge Mt. Photo by Dodo Knight. Below & next two pages, Lovell, Maine by Juanita Perkins.







Mary Calvert
&
Earle Barlow



Two Artists by Jack C. Barnes



Photos by Jack Barnes

EARLE BARLOW — Marine Artist

It is a strikingly beautiful depiction of George Popham's ship *Gift of God* entering the mouth of the Kennebec River on August, 1607, under the watchful eye of two Kennebec Indians which embellishes the cover and jacket of Mary Calvert's *Dawn over the Kennebec*. The artist who painted this masterpiece in water color is Mrs. Calvert's neighbor in East Boothbay, Maine, marine painter Earle Barlow.

Nearly all of Earle Barlow's life has been spent either sailing on a ship or on land within view of the mouth of the Damariscotta River. Earle was born and reared in the picturesque little community of East Boothbay where for generations the Barlow men have been builders of ships and fishermen. Their lives were difficult and the monetary returns were meager. Consequently,

Earle was determined from the time he was a boy growing up that he was going to combine his love for the sea and ships to earn a living in some other way.

Almost from the day he entered the little school in his village, he manifested an affinity for sketching ships. "Probably my love for art came to a flower while my teacher was trying to teach me arithmetic," Earle chuckles.

After Earle finished his elementary education in the local school, his parents sent him inland to attend Gould Academy; but as soon as he graduated, in June of 1941, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. A few months later the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Most of his 4½ years in the Navy were spent on an attack transport which took him to many Pacific harbors in the Philippines, Okinawa,

New Zealand, Australia, and, as he states, "a great many places in between." When the war ended, he was at Pearl Harbor training for an amphibious landing in Japan. Of course, Earle has no regrets that the war ended when it did.

It was while his ship was in San Pedro, California, that he developed serious thoughts about studying art once he was discharged from the Navy.

"I sat and made a sketch of our ship," he recalls, "and other people liked it. I took my sketch to shore and had about five hundred post cards printed to sell to the crew. It really wasn't a great work of art, but I sold the whole batch of them in about two hours."

Almost as soon as Earle was out of the Navy, he enrolled at the Museum

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MARY CALVERT — Her Elixir Is Writing

"To know Maine is to love Maine," says Mary Renier Calvert of East Boothbay. There are few who know or love the state better than she—as her two books, *Maine Captured in Color and Verse* (1976) and *Nature Trails Captured in Color* (1982) clearly indicate. For many years, Mary has successfully exhibited her superb photography covering a wide range of subjects from people to wild flowers. She has been the recipient of a number of awards—including the Deborah Morton Award, an honor given each year by Westbrook College to one or more outstanding Maine women. Now she has suddenly blossomed forth as an outstanding writer of nonfiction with her *Dawn over the Kennebec*, a best-seller, at least in Brunswick and in Maine's eight Bookland stores.

Although Mary has lived much of

her life outside of Maine, she proudly declares, "I had the great good fortune to have been born and raised in Madison, Maine, on the upper reaches of the Kennebec River."

Mrs. Calvert has successfully traced her Maine ancestry to Jonathan Eames, who arrived at Woolwich on the Sheepscot River and became the first settler in what is now the town of Jefferson in 1770. His son, Jonathan Eames, Jr., moved to Madison in 1780, during the latter part of the American Revolution, and helped settle that town.

Mary's grandfather ran the post office and general store in Madison; when her father, Stanley Renier, returned from the Spanish-American War, he took over the store and later became postmaster. In those days, almost everyone who lived in the Kennebec region was involved di-

rectly or indirectly with logging and the lumber business.

Early in Stanley Renier's life, he had worked in lumber camps, so lumbering became a secondary business for him after he took over the family store. It was through her father that Mary became knowledgeable about the "romantic" log drives on the Kennebec and life in the logging camps.

"He used to tell us about the lumber camps," Mary reminisces. "He worked in a lumber camp as a teamster a couple of years up on the Dead River to get enough money to go to business school in Portland. He didn't want to work in a logging camp all of his life."

Mary graduated from Madison High School and was signed up to enter Colby College in the fall of 1923. That summer, however, a young



*Top, Boothbay.
Below, Mary's book,
"Nature Trails."*



student engineer arrived in Madison with a group from the General Electric Company to install the electrical system for the Great Northern Power Plant. His name was Francis Calvert; and he brought an international flavor to Madison, for he was born in Spain and reared in France. After serving in the French Navy throughout World War I, Francis chose to come to the United States and become an electrical engineer. Shortly after his arrival in Madison, his intelligence and charm won the heart of Mary. She soon forgot about Colby College, and the two were married.

Francis was an ambitious and frugal young man who aspired to have his own business. "I always believed in saving ten cents of every dollar I earned," he says.

The couple were still young when Francis retired from General Electric and opened his own plant in Cleveland, Ohio. There he invented and manufactured electrical equipment.

In addition to giving birth and rearing two children, Mary was an indispensable assistant in her husband's business. When Francis opened a new plant called the Calvert Company, she stepped in and took over the management of the old plant and was president of Gran-Cal Incorporated for many years.

It was during the early years when their company was struggling to survive that Mary was introduced to a camera—an old speed-graphic on a wooden tripod which took only black and white photographs. To avoid the expense of hiring a professional photographer, she decided to study photography so that she could photograph, for advertising purposes, the electrical equipment that the Calverts manufactured. Her real interest in photography developed later, however, through her desire to photograph her own grandchildren. This was about thirty years ago. By that time 35-millimeter cameras had

been perfected, and color has been her preferred medium ever since.

Quickly, she became a serious photographer. She sought out such experts as Helen Manzer from New Hampshire, who was noted for her remarkable close-up nature photography; John Doscher, who ran the famous Country School of Photography in South Woodstock, Vermont; and the renowned Canadian nature photographer Freeman Patterson.

There is a sort of timelessness about the Calverts like the Kennebec that Mary loves and writes about. They seem to belong to no one generation but to all generations.

She took courses from the first two and worked at the elbow of Patterson until she mastered the technical skills and acquired the marvelous sense of composition that has won her international acclaim.

By the early 1960's, Mary began making frequent journeys to far distant lands with members of the Photographic Society of America. Over the years the little lady from Madison, Maine, has taken thousands of spectacular colored slides of natural phenomena. When the volcano Surtsey emerged from Icelandic waters and erupted, she flew over it in a light two-passenger plane, taking dramatic photographs that alone have won her many prizes. Breathing photos of icebergs in the Point Barrow area of Alaska, the glaciers in Tierra del Fuego, and the snow-capped Himalayas—the roof top of the world—she has also taken.

One attribute of this grand lady is her magnetic personality, which exudes warmth and melts through language barriers and problems that one normally can expect to encounter in remote places such as in the tropical rain forest between Panama and

Columbia where she went with a small group in dugout canoes to photograph the little-known Choco Indians.

It is quite natural for a woman who has eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren to have a very special love for young people. Consequently, she has done a superb series called "Children around the World." One immediately becomes captivated by a particular photograph in color that has been exhibited many times in which she captured the haunting expression of a little girl on the shores of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia.

Despite (or perhaps because of) her extensive travels, Maine has remained perpetually closest to her heart; for as she says, "The homing pigeon instinct is strong in one. One likes to come back to where he or she is raised."

It is in Maine that Mary, with her remarkable, unerring eye, has done her very best nature photography. The ineffable beauty of her colored photographs of wild flowers in their natural environs leaves people gasping with amazement. "I have never seen anything so beautiful in my life!" exclaimed a lady as she turned the pages of *Nature Trails*.

Each year the Calverts spend two weeks at Kidney Pond Camp at the foot of Mount Katahdin, where Mary has done some of her best photography.

"Growing up along the Mediterranean, I basically had gotten to know only fish," Francis says with a twinkle in his eyes. "I have learned more about nature since I began following Mary around."

Francis did not, however, accompany Mary on her photographic expeditions abroad. "Someone had to stay home and tend the store," Mary laughs heartily.

"The best I could manage," says Francis with his usual good sense of humor, "was a round-trip to Damariscotta."

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Aside from an annual sojourn in France to visit relatives, Francis is quite content to remain close to home. "I had to travel too much when I was young," he declares.

Home since 1970 has been their spacious house overlooking the Damariscotta River in East Boothbay, Maine, although they spend their winters in Florida. The couple chose to live on the coast because Francis has an innate love for the sea and ships.

"I wanted to be a sea captain when I was a boy," he confesses.

In August of 1975, as a part of the Bicentennial celebration, a re-enactment of Arnold's march to Quebec took place beginning in Maine with Arnold's landing in Popham at the mouth of the Kennebec. Mary planned to do a documentary of the entire trip that would terminate with a mock battle on the Plains of Abraham in the old city of Quebec. So this intrepid little lady of seventy set forth, following the Arnold enthusiasts from many parts of the Eastern United States as they progressed up the Kennebec in bateaux and canoes, following religiously the famous Arnold's Trail.

By the first week in October, it was time for her to head up to Quebec City to photograph the re-enactment of the ill-fated battle and the closing ceremonies. Before she was to depart, she telephoned Francis—who was at the plant in Cleveland.

"Francis, I am going to Quebec the end of the week to photograph the mock battle."

There was a long silence before Francis said a word. Finally he asked, "What day is that?"

"October fourth."

"You can't go to Quebec October fourth; that's our wedding anniversary."

"Could we postpone it?" Mary suggested hopefully.

"No," Francis retorted.

Mary did not go to Quebec for the grand finale.

The following year Mary was once again filming an event on the Kennebec—one that would bring to a close an era that was both dramatic and colorful. Never again would men pit their strength and courage against the mighty Kennebec or any other river, for this was to be the last log drive in the United States. And this indomitable lady was right there with her camera snapping picture after picture as the logs were brought down the river from Moosehead Lake to Winslow.

"Environmentalists were largely responsible for stopping the log drives," Mary explains sardonically. "Now logging trucks run up and down the road belching pollution into the air and ruining the roads."

At this point, Mary was just a step away from becoming a writer, although as she says, "Not even while I was photographing these two events did I seriously consider writing a book."

These two momentous events, however, generated an interest on her part to go the Maine State Library in search of material pertaining to the Kennebec region.

The librarian was apologetic as she shook her head and said, "I am sorry, but we really don't have much of anything."

For the moment at least Mary was nonplussed. She had heard so many exciting stories about life and events along the Kennebec when she was a young girl growing up in Madison that it had never occurred to her that so much history and folklore had seemingly gone unrecorded. It was at this point that she undertook four years of extensive and exhaustive research from which she gleaned the material for *Dawn over the Kennebec*.

Because of the paucity of material in the libraries, Mary and Francis began scouring old book stores and

soliciting the aid of book dealers. They were successful beyond any expectations; consequently, Mary has an extraordinary collection of books and materials—many of them primary resources.

One such primary resource which Mary treasures is a tiny book written by Hannah Swanton. Hannah was taken captive in 1690 after the Saint Francis Abenakis captured Fort Casco and killed her husband and other defenders. Hannah, along with other women and children, were compelled to endure the rigors of a forced march to Quebec, much of it made in February when the wilderness of Maine lay deep in snow, ice, and excruciating cold. Often they were totally without food. It is not surprising that many of the captives perished; it was only through very strong religious convictions that Hannah and others like her survived the terrible ordeal.

Mary's knowledge of French proved to be most helpful, for she discovered a wealth of material in Quebec written by French missionaries and priests. She also ascertained that many of these reports and documents are kept today in the archives of Chartres Cathedral. Sojourns she and Francis made in France visiting his relatives allowed her to devote endless hours to examining much of the pertinent material.

Also, "A lot of my research was done on the Kennebec," Mary explains, "by going up and talking with old people. They remembered what their parents and grandparents had told them."

Four years of concentrated research later, Mary began writing. When she took her material to Twin City Printery in Lewiston, Maine, however, the editor there exclaimed, "Why, Mary, you have enough material for two books here!"

So Mary commenced work on *Dawn over the Kennebec*, which begins with the legends of the Ken-



Mary & Francis Calvert

nebec Indians and ends chronologically with Arnold's march to Quebec.

As soon as Mary finished each chapter, she sent it to individuals who are considered to be authorities on that subject. For example, all of her chapters pertaining to the Abenaki Indians were read and edited by Stephen Laurent of Intervale, New Hampshire, son of the scholarly Abenaki Chief Joseph Laurent. Stephen is himself an authority on the Abenakis, having done an English translation of the Jesuit missionary Father Rasle's Abenaki-French dictionary. Mary hopes to get it printed for him—just as in 1884 Stephen's father published a book called *Abenaki and English Dialogues*.

Mary devotes several hours each day to completing a sequel to *Dawn over the Kennebec*—which after only four months has gone into its second printing. *Kennebec Wilderness Awakens* will be ready for publication in 1985.

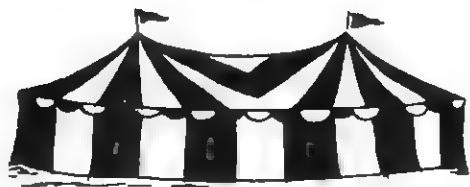
As with her first book about the Kennebec, Mary Calvert feels a profound sense of gratitude for the people of all ages who have been willing to share knowledge and whatever materials they have with her.

"So many wonderful people have helped to make both books possible!" Mary exclaims.

Two such people who have contributed so much to her *Kennebec Wilderness Awakens* are Elizabeth Hamilton Hartsgrove and her twin sister Elinor. The latter was the head nurse for the colorful and beloved Doctor Pritham of Greenville, and for many years served the logging camps in that area. Her sister Elizabeth, author of a book of poetry called *Heritage Maine*, is a noted amateur archaeologist who donated her exceptionally fine collection of artifacts to the Greenville library.

"Even the pupils of the upper Kennebec Valley Memorial High School pitched in and wrote essays for me," Mary exults. "My friend Louise Melcher of Bingham ran an essay competition with the principal's help on the subject 'My home town and school.' We gave prizes, and the essays were so good that I would love to use them all! But I will only be able to use a few as an ending for volume two."

Mary and Francis Calvert are a splendid couple. They have as much love for each other today as when they were married sixty years ago in



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Madison. They have always worked together as a team. Mary began her career as a photographer of her husband's inventions. Now in their golden years, Mary has become a writer, and Francis devotes much of his time to assisting her in every way possible. He admits to being eighty-one, but all Mary will say is that she is somewhat younger than her husband and became an author in her seventies.

"She and Methusela were friends," Francis says with a chuckle.

"That's right," Mary agrees, "but don't print that."

There is a sort of timelessness about the Calverts like the Kennebec that Mary loves and writes about. They seem to belong to no one generation but to all generations. Of course, their grandchildren and great-grandchildren help them to keep young. One of their great-grandchildren asked Francis recently, "Grampa, were there dinosaurs in the streets when you were a boy?"

No, Mary and Francis have no time to dwell upon such things. They are too busy with projects that involve togetherness. For those who sit back and say, "I am too old to try something new," or "I always wanted to be a writer, but I waited too long and now it is too late in life"—let them look to Mary Calvert for inspiration. For Mary at least, writing is her elixir of youth. §

Jack Barnes is a teacher and freelance writer in Hiram, Maine.



... Artist Earle Barlow

School of Fine Arts in Boston. It was here that he met Helen, who had graduated from Sanford High School and was also studying painting.

Within a year, the two were married and lived on a fishing boat, leisurely cruising back and forth from Winter Harbor to Boston during most of the late 1940's. Earle devoted many hours to his painting, mostly of yachts.

"We had no responsibilities. Frequently we were down to our last can of beans!"

After spending a winter on their boat in Chesapeake Bay, the couple returned to Maine, sold their craft, and purchased a schooner. For two more years they lived the romantic, carefree life aboard their sailing vessel before selling it in 1951 so that Earle could return to art school and then earn a Master's degree in education at Tufts University.

After he completed his graduate work, Earle and Helen became more or less land bound. Earle accepted a position teaching art at Brunswick High School and Helen devoted most of her time and energy to rearing their three children—Michael, Cathy, and Chris.

For ten years Earl divided his time between teaching and painting. Especially during the summers his works were exhibited in a number of places, and his remarkable ability to portray all kinds of ships—combining realism with an unusual interplay of colors such as no camera could ever capture—almost immediately caught the public's eye. Within a short time he had become one of those rare artists whose paintings are in demand. More and more owners of yachts, sailing vessels, and people whose ancestors either had owned a schooner or sailed on one sought out Earle Barlow and commissioned him to do paintings for them.

Inspired by the enthusiasm his paintings were generating, especially



Helen and Earle Barlow

among sailing enthusiasts, Earle and Helen opened up an art gallery in 1962. But for several years he continued to work at two professions. "I was told I wouldn't have any trouble selling my works, but I still didn't have the courage to resign from teaching and devote all of my time to painting. Besides, Brunswick High School had a very good art program—about the second best in Maine."

Three years later, however, Earle's paintings were in such great demand that he left teaching to devote all of his time to being an artist.

In 1972 the Barlows succumbed to the powerful spell of the sea once again. Divesting themselves of their property, they made plans to set sail for Europe with their youngest child Chris in a 34-ft ketch which Earle had designed and built. For three years they cruised at their usual leisurely pace about much of northern Europe, sailing from England to France, to Sweden and Finland and back to Scotland and England before making the long return voyage across the Atlantic to the home port at East Boothbay. The first year they wintered in Amsterdam and the second in Hamburg, Germany. They were snug and comfortable in the cabin of

their vessel, and Earle continued painting and exhibited his paintings in several places such as the gallery in Hamburg during the sojourn.

Perhaps more important than anything, the Barlows were exposed to new horizons. The close-knit family shared many rich and memorable experiences; their three years before the mast was experienced without any near catastrophes—for which the trio had no regrets.

As soon as the adventurers returned to Maine, their decision to go ashore again meant purchasing a new home and gallery. Since Earle needed to devote all of his time and resources to his work and the gallery, it also meant that he could no longer feasibly maintain his ketch. The Barlows were saddened, but as Earle explains, "We knew that once we had done our thing with the boat, we would probably have to sell it. It wasn't practical to keep it once we had decided to move ashore."

Earle and Helen live quiet but busy lives. Helen is putting her artistic talents to good use by painting on ceramics for a local firm, and Earle is kept so busy maintaining his gallery and doing commissions that, except for a display of his work at the



*Models of
Earle Barlow's
ketch and
schooner.*

Massachusetts House in Lincolnville, he has little or no time to fulfill an ever-increasing number of requests for exhibitions elsewhere. He devotes a minimum of five hours a day to his work. "I paint until I feel my work is beginning to get a little careless," he explains.

Except when Earle is painting a boat or ship with a scenic background such as a lighthouse at Ram Island, he does most of his work in his studio. More often than not he is familiar enough with the craft so that he is able to work directly on the paper or canvas he is going to paint on without making a previous sketch. More recently he has started using a Polaroid on occasions to photograph the scenic background that he wishes to include in the painting.

Earle's most recent creation is a portfolio of ten prints of schooners in watercolor, which he appropriately calls "Great American Schooners." What living person has been on more intimate terms with schooners than Earle Barlow?

THE LAW

My mother gave me kindness,
My father gave me truth.
My grandpa sparked the writing bug,
My children gave me youth.

My friends all share their many gifts.
My husband gives me trust.
My Lord has given everything
To a world which was unjust.

I must give back the kindness,
I must give back the truth.
I must continue writing now
And live as though in youth.

I must then share my many gifts.
I must return the trust,
For if I give back all good things,
In judgement, I'll be just.

Joy Barlow

... Brookfield Farm

tant ridge above the bog where tall gray trunks of cadaverous pine stand like mute sentinels casting dark shadows across still waters. Suddenly I spotted a muskrat climbing out on a dead log, and two black ducks pad-

dling about. Then, just as I was about to take a step, my eyes rested upon one of the does browsing less than a hundred feet from me. I watched her with utter delight until she disappeared behind a pile of brush left by the loggers, and then I stole silently away. It is likely that she was totally aware of my presence and knew that I was her protector.

No, I agree with the septuagenarian who stopped by to remind me that what I had purchased "ain't wuth much;" that is, of course, speaking in terms of material value. It is too distant and dangerous because of coyotes to pasture my sheep there, and I shall not be on this earth long enough to witness a new growth of trees reach maturity. But if I can provide a protective enclave where wildlife can survive without the danger of being shot or trapped, I feel that I have made a sound and rewarding investment. §

Brookfield Farm is in Hiram, Maine.



Mothers' Days

ON MOTHERING

by Pamela Penfield

I remember well, as all mothers do, the day my oldest—and at the time my only—child started first grade. She marched off down the road without a backward glance, head high, being resolutely brave. It was I who dissolved into sentimental tears, full of worries for her, painfully aware that this was but the first leg of a journey into uncharted territory, where 'my baby' would be less and less influenced and/or protected by my motherly solicitude. I adjusted to this first separation, of course; and if I didn't fill my time in ways I might now consider creative, at least I did learn to enjoy my own company—no small accomplishment at the time. But I can still recall vividly the pain of that first leavetaking.

We all know the ultimate goal of truly caring parents is to raise a mature, responsible individual who can function very well without us, thank you; but nevertheless, it is sometimes painful getting there. And we wouldn't be human, I suppose, if we didn't feel the bonds tearing loose a little here and there with an occasional twinge of, if not pain, at least discomfort. And yet, consider the time of birth: the cutting of the umbilical cord is of course the first real separation between mother and child. Yet we rarely view this severing of symbiotic bonds as a loss;

rather, we see it as freeing mother and child to come together in a way far more fulfilling than was possible in their previous state of physical oneness. Oh, the wonder of our baby, free from the confinement of the womb, placed at last in our long-ing arms. Now, finally, we can hold and cuddle and talk to this new little individual, look full in the face of this complete, unique being taking his or her own special place on earth. If we can just learn to let this same attitude color our feelings about all the succeeding stages of separation, relaxing into the current of Life's design, how much easier things will be for us and the children who must separate from us to survive.

Now that my oldest daughter is an adult, firmly established in her own life, I often feel we are free to enjoy the best of both worlds; the mother-daughter relationship is an on-going one, to be sure. Yet as it recedes into the background, we are able to discover what it is to be adult friends, to see and respect one another as two separate, unique individuals in a more complete and realistic way than was possible before.

I haven't really had to deal with 'empty nest syndrome' yet, however, for I now have two more little girls who fill my nest quite adequately! But I know from experience how quickly they, too, will be grown and gone, and I am preparing in both emotional and practical ways for the

time when my days will no longer be shaped by their presence and their needs. I know that I will experience more 'twinges' as they pass through all the succeeding stages of emotional and physical separation. But I know too that in a very real sense my nest will never actually be 'empty.' As we continue to let our spiritual vision clarify, discovering more fully the essences of our true spiritual being, we inevitably see more clearly the fact of our essential oneness with the whole body of mankind. Thus we come to see our 'nest' as a far larger place than the comfortable little corner in which we have nurtured our young ones; and we will perhaps find even more ways in which to release this nurturing spirit creatively than we did when our days were full of diapers and nursing. And if we sometimes miss the warmth and comfort of little arms around us, little people to share our days—well, there are other compensations; and there is the realization that the bond we share with our children is ultimately eternal and everlasting. Like all the cords woven by love, it is too strong, too enduring, to be severed by time or distance. Knowing this, perhaps we can learn to let the necessary separations—or what appear to be separations to our human hearts and minds—be quick and clean, as the umbilical cord is cut at birth. So is the door opened to an even greater

fulfillment of Life's purposes than we have known heretofore. Let us experience it with rejoicing.

Ms. Penfield lives in Exeter, N.H.

A MOTHER WHO WOULDN'T BE STEREOTYPED

by Beatrice H. Comas

We tend to stereotype mothers as though they were cast from the same mold and 50 years ago in the Maine village where I lived women did all seem to be cut from one pattern...good homemakers, conventional, satisfied to let the menfolk take the reins. The village was 10 miles from the nearest city and except for occasional shopping trips and Sunday drives, the natives hadn't traveled very far nor did they know much of other cultures. Once or twice a year a peddler might come into town on the interurban line to brighten the lives of the local women when he opened his battered suitcase containing tapestries, lace work and sundries. There were also occasional visits from foreign missionaries who conducted services at one or the other of the village churches. Church and Grange socials and suppers provided most of our entertainment but my mother still felt a void. She had an inquisitive and analytical mind and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Housework, gardening, caring for a husband and child both away at work and at school all day, left time for introspection. The nearest neighbors were an elderly widow, an aged seamstress who was hired by the day for sewing, and gnome-like Elmer Towle, who was literally a hermit. I was an only child and ours was the only cat and dog on the quiet street. My mother must have been very lonely.

Fortunately, an oasis appeared in her spiritual desert in the shabby

form of Timothy Melville, a stooped, scholarly man who still wore steel-rimmed glasses and looked like a wizened child lost in the moth-eaten folds of his World War I overcoat.

Timothy Melville lived at the edge of town in a previously untenanted, lopsided shack that should have been condemned long before. He did not even have adequate shelter; for the roof leaked and it was a wonder that he was able to keep his few precious volumes protected from the elements.

Melville had once been an important newspaper publisher in the west but was now penniless. He had lost everything in a slander suit against his paper and had deserted a beloved wife and daughter rather than bring them shame. He had become a hobo and quite by accident found himself in this secluded hamlet.

My mother, a born "liberationist," had often befriended unfortunate souls, like the young wife who was allowed to hide at our house to escape her drunken husband's beatings or the woman who had lost a leg and could never go out in winter. My mother used to haul her on a sled to enjoy a Sunday or holiday dinner with us. She sometimes carried complete meals nicely covered with her best linen napkins to shut-ins. Thus it was natural to succumb to the plight of Timothy Melville.

He appeared at our door each morning except Sunday at the stroke of nine o'clock. He sat like a miniature king at the breakfast table while my mother acted as short-order cook, heaping his plate with hash browns, eggs, bacon or sausage, with toast and home-made jelly. His manners were impeccable but for so small a man he had a prodigious appetite, stoking up as though each meal might be his last. This, along with the fruit, cookies and sandwiches that Mother put into a brown bag for him to take home, probably meant his survival.

He was a formidable opponent in debate and a convincing story teller. He seemed to grow in stature as his oratorical powers increased. My mother was a good sparring partner and the heat of their arguments was only surpassed by the heat of the old wood range. Politics, religion, education and literature hung in the balance with many histrionic gestures with forks and spatulas. These sessions were carried on between stove, table and sink, and lasted from one to two hours, depending upon the urgency of the issues.

The relationship my mother had with Melville I called an "exchange program"...bodily sustenance in exchange for spiritual manna. Not many "depression wives" would have been as generous with hard-earned groceries but it was her nature to sacrifice willingly for any worthwhile cause. Breakfasts and bag lunches were little enough to give in return for the verbal parry and thrust and the access to literary masterpieces, nor would a gift of a thousand dollars have pleased her as much as the leather bound edition of Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" or the illustrated, gilt-edged pages of Adam Bede, salvaged from his past and given in gratitude for his daily bread.

This mutually-rewarding arrangement was to last another two years, then three mornings went by and Timothy did not appear. We had no telephone but on the third day my mother and father walked the mile and a half to Melville's shack. They were too late.

The town fathers voted to tear down the dilapidated hovel and we never knew what happened to his treasured books.

His passing was mentioned at Whittaker's General Store but didn't even cause a ripple of interest among the inhabitants of the village. Only my mother wept.

MOTHER

by Vincent Argondezzi

I grew up in a neighborhood that was flanked on one side by the freight yards. We were cautioned constantly about the dangers in wandering from our protected land of play to the area where our mortal gods lived, the engineers and brakemen.

They shared their world of magic with us, showing us the mechanics of the giant steam engines and telling us stories of the wonderful land of America.

Sometimes we met the men who rode the rails free, plagued by wanderlust and unable to call any single place home but instead having the whole of America as their home, this beautiful land tied together by the ribbons of tracks.

I met one such man one day while walking along the river. He was a friendly person and he liked the engineers and brakemen, had fabulous stories to tell and I was a willing listener.

Once, in a moment of reverie, he began recounting tales of his childhood, that wonderful land of magic and recall. It was close to Mother's Day and he told me of the everlasting beauty of mother and how all of us are only little boys and girls at heart when we remember the wondrous days when we were tied to mother's apron strings.

"I have something here I would like to give you," he said, and he produced an old church bulletin that he had carried close to his heart.

Many years have gone since that day but I still recall that beautiful message:

MOTHER, you carried me close to your heart, loved me before I was born, took God's hand and walked through the valleys and shadows that I might live. You nursed me when I was weary, comforted me on pillows softer than down and sang to me



in the voice of an angel. You took my hand till I learned to walk, taught my lips the way to talk, and led me to the King's highway to play the manly part. I will never forget you, my wonderful mother.

The message was marked anonymous which seemed fitting because it seemed divinely inspired to bind the world together in the universal love for mother.

Norristown, PA

SEPARATION

As a kite born skywards on a summer breeze

Only a thin cord holding you to me
Much longer than that which held you in my womb

This cord holds you only with my love
So fly as far and high as you desire

But leave me the comfort of the cord
It's all I have
Don't tear it from my hand.

Joan F. Smith
Germany (A.P.O., NY)

LULLABY

My little child,
you reach for beams of golden light
and ask to hold the moon tonight.
How can I give the moon to you?

My little child,
I'll give you fireflies in jars,
shiny stones from falling stars,
or pine cones swinging in a tree.

My little child,
I'll give you starfish from the sea
and shells with endless melody,
but only God can hold the moon.

Edith Lane Noble
Londonderry, NH

MY MOTHER

used to tell me that I chose her, just
before I was born.
As a little girl, I laughed, delighted.
As a teenager, I scoffed in denial.
Now, as a young woman, I look back
in fondness at all the times she
skipped with me through the
park, holding my hand.
I comfort myself with memories of her
bending over me as I woke from
a nightmare,
or wiping away tears that sprang from
a source only she could
understand.
I recall moments in which I shared a
part of myself that could be
trusted only to her.

The child in me still needs her
still depends on her
still believes that she is perfect.
The woman in me can stand back, and
recognize that she too makes
mistakes.
I am forever discovering new
strengths, special characteristics,
and silly idiosyncrasies, new
facets of this profound, delight-
ful woman I call "Mother."
I am fortunate. Not only to be of her,
but to know her.
For knowing her as I now do is to love
her deeply,
and to experience a great sense of
good fortune.
Now I only wonder how, nearly
twenty years ago, I was so wisely
selective.
Remember sleepy mornings, when
conversation came so easily?

Mother and daughter, sharing coffee,
sharing feelings.
It was all so simple then.
Sometimes all I wanted was to stay in
my robe, and let the hours of the
day fly by with our words.
Sometimes we almost did!
I remember those mornings, feeling so
close to you, feeling like friends.
Now, so far away, having coffee alone,
I miss you.
But I love you more every day, even
though we seldom talk, and
never see each other.
It's just for now.
Soon, I will be home.
Soon Mama, we'll share old things,
and new, once again.

Elisa Painten

A WOMAN

In this face I see shadows of hard
times that used to be her life.
I see traces of tears that leave not
weary tracks, but softness, and
compassion,
known only to those who have suf-
fered, and survived.
In those eyes I see reflections of pains
endured by a woman all alone.
They leave not dim resignation, but a
glorious light of faith in some
inner, private self.
In this mouth I see left-over whispers
that gave courage in the midst of
conflict, and lines from forced
smiles of bravery.
They look not like scars, for they serve
only to emphasize the dancing
hint of a smile that suggests
wisdom, and strength.

In this face I see there is peace.
There is beauty and love, and an eternal
belief in self.
In this face I see my mother.
I hope my life can take me half that far.

*Elisa Painten
Dover, N.H.*

*Ms. Painten is the daughter of Pamela
Penfield, whose essay appears on page
37 of this issue.*

MY MOTHER'S HEART

My years
should be
more tolerant these days.
They should see
the soft ways
of my mother's
heart, and mourn
the Sparrow's death.

*Wayne Hogan
Cookeville, TN*

ON BIRTH

This
tiny child
so sweet,
so new,
so mild.
This
true happiness
so great
so it grew
so wild.
This
meaningful
gesture of life—
I thank you.

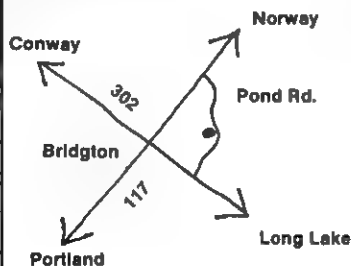
*Dorothy Murphy
Philadelphia, PA*

THE MAY BASKET

I'll fix a May-basket for mother
A May-basket of flowers and sweets,
And two ribbons I'll tie round the handle
Two ribbons tied tight with love,
For the ribbons are mother and daughter
And the fillings beneath show their love.

*J. R. Libby
Winslow, ME*

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**PERENNIAL
POINT OF VIEW**

**Perennial Herbs, Shrubs.
Nursery Open
Annual Greenhouse Open May 1**



Unlabeled, forgotten, this Victorian vignette was plucked from a box at an antique shop in Liberty. Genealogists on the prowl covet such evidence of their own ancestors. Photo, Courtesy, "The Courier-Gazette," Rockland, Maine (with permission).

MAINELY ANCESTORS *by Lauralee Clayton*

"My ancestor must have been one of the original test tube babies," writes a frustrated family-historian. "I simply can't find a trace of his parents."

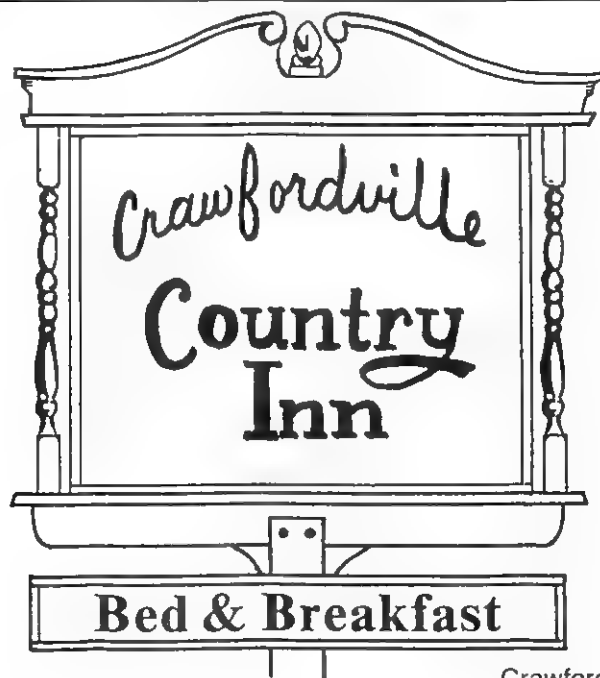
The hunt is on despite setbacks and stone walls encountered by the most determined genealogists. Whether stalking soldiers whose guns fell quiet in the last century, setting a spyglass to a long-vanished sea captain or scratching in the attic for a vintage scrapbook of family photos, crowds of people are scrutinizing their Maine origins.

Alice Walker of Washington state searches for news of her forebear Captain John Marble who roved the Kennebec River area in 1810. Joan Bussey Raia of Florida

is tireless in her efforts to locate names of the forgotten parents of Sophronia Bartlett of Newburgh, Maine. Sophronia married a Bussey, it seems, in Monroe, sometime in 1843. And a Canadian researcher is curious about the circumstances surrounding the murder in Rockland of a schoolteacher antecedent in the last century.

Organized interest in the pursuit of genealogy dates back in the state to 1875 with the founding of the Maine Genealogical and Biographical Society. Then in 1884 seven Portland residents launched the Maine Genealogical Society which eventually, in 1922, merged with the Maine Historical Society.

Page 43 . . .



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... Mainely Ancestors

Interest in family trees apparently waned. After five decades of dormancy, with the approach of the nation's Bicentennial, people once again wondered about their roots. A new Maine Genealogical Society was formed as the result of a conversation in a Farmington living room and its numbers since 1976 have reached well over 1,150. (Mailing address for the society is P.O. Box 221, Farmington, Maine.)

Billowing success for the state society signals a demand on Maine's resource facilities. Those with tangled lines find the Maine State Archives in Augusta a popular port of call. Staff member Sylvia Sherman points the way to some uncommon sources she's run across in her work there. One, she tells members of M.G.S., is a 54-foot long scroll of foolscap sheets pasted together. It contains the signatures of 3,427 women—somebody's female ancestors. The petitioners were fervently protesting the Gag Rules passed in 1847 and '48 by a Southern majority prohibiting the discussion of slavery. These petitions circulated from Bangor to Hampden and down into the southern part of the state.

Another little-known source, says Sherman, is the Brides File. Roll call order is by maiden name of the bride, leading to name of the groom in the marriage. On this microfilm are surnames of Maine-wedded brides from 1890 to 1953, an index of great value to family tree climbers. Other archival treasures include bounty claims, census records, vital statistics cards turned into the state by town clerks on demand in 1892 and veterans data, to tag a few resources.

Brittle pages of ships' registers and aging journals along with yellowed documents from the clipper days attract family historians to the marine museums in Bath and Searsport. The Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport exhibits over 300 por-

traits of ancestral sea captains, dazzling those on a travelling roots toot.

Researchers steaming off to Portland and the library of the Maine Historical Society on Congress Street are apt to find that any vacant chairs in the reading room are still warm from use. The facility, having published six volumes of Maine, Province and Court Records boasts 60,000 printed works on state and family history. Among the holdings are 1.7 million manuscripts, documents, Maine photographs, newspapers curling with age and an array of Maine census material on microfilm. Non-members pay a fee to use the library. Staff members maintain a "Genealogies In Progress" file on lines being researched by members to save duplication of effort in detective work. Corresponding genealogists are offered the opportunity for some preliminary research by mail by the staff upon payment of a one-time fee.

Genealogy buffs think nothing of driving miles to finger and scan the volumes of history and genealogy sequestered in the Special Collections Department of the Raymond H. Fogler Library at Orono's University of Maine. On microfilm here is an expansive collection of Maine newspapers as well as a glittering index of Revolutionary War veterans.

Haunted by the past or hunting great-grandpas, researchers often probe resources at the Farmingdale, Maine branch library of the Church of Jesus Christ, Latter-Day Saints. At this Maine Stake facility historians may order microfilms from Salt Lake City for plumbing depths in census and parish records from America and abroad.

Magnetizing those tracking pioneers, farmers, fishermen, soldiers and sea-faring folk, the Maine Old Cemetery Association's projects prove helpful in tracing lost forebears through cemetery records gleaned from headstones by squads of

volunteers. The MOCA Surname Index Project chronicles over 155,000 names of persons residing in Maine from 1650 to 1970 and this information is shared in a series of bulging notebooks on file at the state library in Augusta. Besides tramping through burial grounds to read epitaphs, MOCA volunteers contribute toward other activities including a Bicentennial Index Project and a Marble Records project, both of which are discussed in the organization's newsletter. The address for MOCA is 8 Greenaway Road, Springvale, Maine.

Other avenues for family historians combing the state include queries in newspaper genealogy columns. At the present time three papers carry such columns: *The Maine Sunday Telegram* (Arlene Loud, "What's In A Name,"); *The Somerset Reporter* (Virginia T. Merrill); and *The Courier-Gazette* (this writer, "Your Side of the Family"). It's also possible to stretch out feelers for concrete data through magazine queries in *Downeast Ancestry*, published in Machias.

THE GARDEN

There was a garden, although small,
Which, when I was a boy,
Did bring to me I do recall
And others lots of joy.
Its picket fence ran right beside
The sidewalk of cement
And, 'though the flowers it didn't hide,
"Keep Out" was what it meant.

The flowers always were to grow
And poke their heads up through
About a foot or more of snow
According to their cue.
I knew those flowers were designed
To cause my heart to sing
'Cause following not far behind
Would be the season Spring.

That garden is no longer there—
It's long since been destroyed—
And my grandchildren cannot share
In what I once enjoyed.

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Baffled genealogists frequently turn for help to their public libraries. Trailside assistance in the Portland public library is available in a special room furnished with tables and easy chairs for ruminating on rosters of names. Informal groups of genealogists meet on a regular basis at Cutler Library in Farmington and at the Belfast Free Library. Activities range from clipping obituary columns to discussing specific problems encountered in their diggings. Within arm's reach are shelves of published genealogies on Maine families and background material for a thorough search of the past.

Finally, in skimming the cream from Maine's resource possibilities, don't overlook the churnings of private individuals who spend evening and spare hours compiling data because they truly enjoy the work. For example, Malcolm Jackson of Thom-

aston and the Charles Candages of Rockland have docketed thousands of names from the 1870's to 1890's along the coast, thumbing through obituaries, church records and vital statistics in two unrelated projects. Jackson's private boxes of files and the typescripts of the Candages, deposited in some libraries, will serve future genealogists well.

The present fever pitch in the nation's third-most popular hobby is perhaps a response to the age-old question of Xenophanes, "Who among men art Thou and Thy years how many, good friend?" In rubbing the moss from great-grandma's gravestone for a closer look, many people are gearing up for a new adventure in genealogy, joining thousands in and out of the state who are discovering their Maine ancestors.

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Homemade

"RHUBARB

RHUBARB PUDDING

1 T. butter	1 t. soda
1 c. sugar	½ t. salt
1 egg	1 c. sour milk
2 c. flour	2 c. diced rhubarb

Cream together butter and sugar; add egg, beating well. Stir small amount of flour over rhubarb. Combine flour, soda and salt; add alternately with sour milk to creamed mixture. Add rhubarb mixture. Pour into greased and floured 9 x 9 x 2-inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour, or until golden brown. Serve warm with whipped cream, if desired. Yield: 9 servings.

RHUBARB COBBLER

4 c. rhubarb	1 egg
1½ c. sugar	1 c. flour
1 T. butter	1 t. baking powder
1 c. sugar	½ c. sweet milk
½ c. shortening	

Place first 3 ingredients in saucepan; cook till tender. In a mixing bowl, cream sugar and shortening; add egg. Sift flour and baking powder; add alternately to first mixture with milk. Pour rhubarb sauce in 8-inch square pan; spoon cobbler mixture over rhubarb. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 to 60 minutes. Yield 9 servings.

RHUBARB MARMALADE

1 lb. rhubarb, cut up
3 oranges - 1 lemon

Cut up rhubarb and weigh. Place in



large kettle. Put oranges and lemon through food grinder and add to rhubarb. Add 3 pints cold water. Stir well and set aside for 24 hours. Bring to a boil and cook slowly for 10 min-

RECEIPTS"

utes; set aside for another 24 hours.

Add an equal amount of sugar and bring to a boil. Cook slowly for about 2 hours. Put in jelly glasses and top with paraffin.

If a firmer marmalade is desired, one package of Sure-Jell may be added.

RHUBARB CRUNCH

1 c. flour	1 t. cinnamon
¾ to 1 c. quick oatmeal	4 c. cut rhubarb
1 c. brown sugar	1 c. white sugar
½ c. melted butter	1 c. water
	2 T. cornstarch
	1 t. vanilla (optional)

Mix flour, oatmeal, brown sugar, butter and cinnamon. Press half of the mixture in 9x13-inch greased pan; cover with rhubarb. Cook white sugar, water and cornstarch until clear; add vanilla. Pour over rhubarb. Cover with remaining crumbs. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

RHUBARB CRUNCH CAKE

½ c. plus 2 T. margarine	1 c. thick sour cream
1½ c. brown sugar	2 c. sifted flour
2 eggs	½ c. chopped nuts
1 t. vanilla	1½ c. finely chopped rhubarb
1 t. soda	½ c. sugar (white)
1 t. cinnamon	½ t. nutmeg

Cream ½ cup butter and brown sugar; blend in eggs and vanilla. Dissolve soda in sour cream. Stir in

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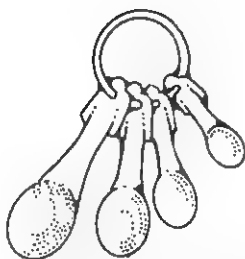


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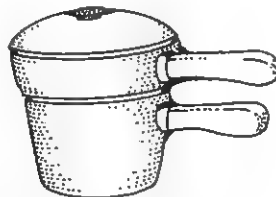


alternately with flour. Add nuts and rhubarb. Turn into greased and floured 9x13-inch pan. Combine remaining ingredients and sprinkle over top. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes. May be served warm with cream.

RHUBARB TAPIOCA PUDDING

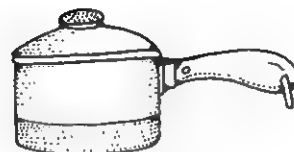
$\frac{1}{3}$ c. quick cooking tapioca 3 c. rhubarb
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ c. boiling water $1\frac{1}{3}$ c. sugar
 $\frac{2}{3}$ t. salt

Put tapioca in double boiler; add boiling water and salt; cook until tapioca has absorbed water. Peel rhubarb, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces, crosswise and sprinkle with sugar. Add to tapioca; cook until tapioca is transparent and rhubarb soft. Serve with sugar and thin cream.



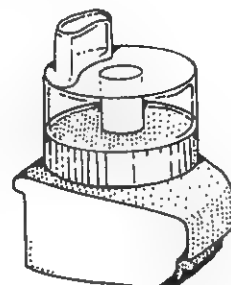
STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB PIE

1 qt. strawberries, or
2 c. strawberries and
2 c. rhubarb, cut up
1 c. sugar
2 T. cornstarch
1 T. lemon juice
1 baked pie shell
1 c. heavy cream, whipped



Wash and hull berries; put in strainer over bowl. Let drain for 2 hours; add enough water to make 1 cup juice. Mix sugar and cornstarch; add strawberry juice. Cook until clear; stir in lemon juice. Chill. Place drained berries in pie shell; add juice mixture.

If using rhubarb with the strawberries, cook the 2 cups of cut up rhubarb in the strawberry juice until tender; then add the cornstarch and cook until clear; add the lemon juice. Chill. Proceed as above.

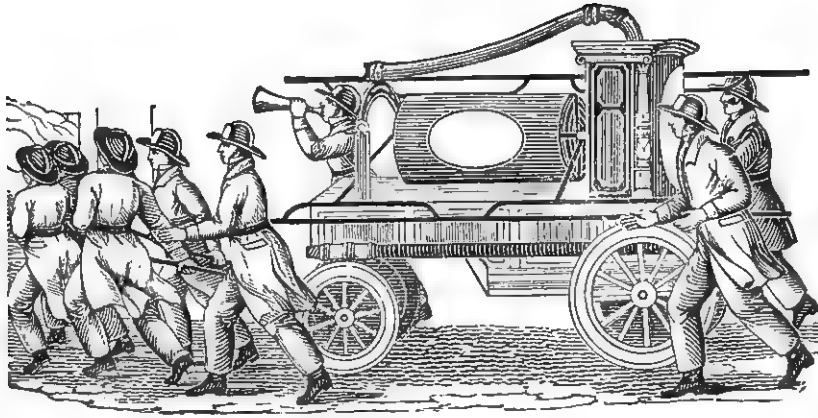


RHUBARB CHUTNEY

4 lbs rhubarb, cut small
2 rounding T. salt
2 pkgs. raisins, seeded (chopped)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. cloves
1 t. cinnamon
4 lbs. brown sugar
3 c. vinegar
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ lemons (juice and rind put thru food chopper)
1 jar preserved ginger (cut in small pieces)
2 packages seedless raisins (left whole)
8 small green peppers, cut up (the kind that come in pepper sauce)

Combine, cook slowly 2 hrs. or until consistency of marmalade. Makes 15 pints.

A Memorial Day Fiasco



THE FIRE THAT DROVE TO WAKEFIELD, N.H.

by Elaine McManus

There comes a time in every parent's life when their oldest child leaves home to start a life of her own. My husband and I reached that time. Our oldest daughter was moving to Massachusetts to start a new job and a new life. I was excited for my daughter but at the same time I felt a fear of loneliness I tried to ignore.

I did my best to put a lid on my feelings and went forward with plans to help my daughter. Lisa was almost 20, trained in respite care, and had a job working with the elderly in Lowell, Mass. My parents live in Lowell and Lisa was moving into a small apartment in the rear of their home.

Lisa and I went to as many yard sales as we could to purchase kitchen items and anything else she would need for an apartment. I gave her an old sofa and allowed her to take her bedroom furniture. Somehow we managed to fit everything in the back of my husband's pick-up truck.

My husband Gerry owns a grey 1966 Chevrolet pick-up with red wooden stakes along the back. He says in a few short years it will be an antique, but to me it's just an old truck. Driving all over New England without a bit of trouble, he treats his truck with tender loving care.

Every time I drive it, something happens. I never feel it's my fault, but you could say that I'm a bit of a jinx. For instance, once I was driving and a rock flew up and broke the windshield. Is that my fault? Or the time when the linkage was twisted and the truck was stuck in first gear in the middle of town. Was it my fault it happened on the coldest day in December? Or the time when the steering let go.

With my track record, we both felt my husband should drive Lisa to Massachusetts. Gerry was all set to leave until Lisa took her ceramic pig.

The pig is about two feet high and Lisa didn't want to take a chance on it breaking. So there it sat in the middle of the seat between Lisa and her father. If that wasn't bad enough, she put a straw hat on it and a favorite house plant on top of the hat. My husband took one look at that pig and remembered a million things he had to do. So off we went, mother and daughter, driving with a truck loaded to the maximum; and my husband standing in the driveway quite relieved to stay home.

It was Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend and we were thankful for the sunny weather. We left around ten a.m. and driving was pleasant for such a weekend.

I couldn't see out of the rear view mirror because all the furniture and clothes packed in the back rose far above the window. I stopped a few times to make sure everything was secure. Gerry did have side view mirrors on the doors of the truck, but my husband was going to give his baby a new paint job. He had taken off all the chrome, including the side view mirrors.

The ash tray was full of everything but cigarette butts. Gerry and I don't smoke so he used the ash tray for toll-booth change, life savers, a pocket watch, a few keys and an assortment of pens. Unfortunately, Lisa does smoke. Instead of using the ash tray she used the window.

We were driving from Bartlett down Route 16 south to the Spaulding Turnpike. We never made it quite that far. Almost the last intersection before the Spaulding Turnpike, we were stopped for a set of lights when we heard a horn blowing. I remember thinking that this man was very impatient because he kept honking his horn. Another car drove by and started pointing at the rear of the truck. I said, "Lisa, something must be loose in the back. I'm going to pull over to this gas station and fix it."

I pulled over, turned off the engine and got out of the truck. Before I even had a chance to look at the back of the truck, a man out of nowhere ran to me and yelled, "Lady, your truck is on fire!" Before I had a chance to look up, a car drove by and blew its horn. A woman was shouting, "Follow me to the fire department." I turned quick and saw smoke; then without hesitation I jumped into the truck.

I didn't take time to speak or look at Lisa, but I could see from the corner of my eye she was ready to panic. She kept wiggling in her seat and I could see her shoulders move to the right and then the left. I realized she didn't know if she should

stay or jump. I was about ready to panic myself but a voice was speaking to me. It was the voice of my husband. The voice was saying, "You've finally killed my truck." I shouted, "Hang on to your seat!" Lisa's body stiffened so instantly I could feel the tension through the cushion of the seat.

I pushed in the clutch and turned the key. Nothing happened. I'll never forget the panic I felt at that moment. I tried it again and the truck started. I pulled out of that gas station going as fast as I could. The woman in front of me kept blowing her horn to clear any traffic on the road—luckily there wasn't one car in sight. We were approaching a curve in the road with a narrow bridge crossing over a brook or a small pond. There were some people walking on the road along the curve. I began to blow my horn. They noticed me and my fire, and instead of moving they stayed to watch. Being afraid something might fall out and injure or burn the pedestrians, I had to slow down.

I was in total panic at this point. It seemed like ten minutes went by, but in reality it wasn't more than one. I began traveling up a hill with cars parked on both sides and that woman in the car ahead of me was still honking her horn. I was approaching the top of the hill and I could see the flames blazing from my rear view mirror. I was going as



fast as I could. I remember shouting, "Where is she taking me, where's the fire department?"

Just as I crested the hill, I could see fire engines. "Thank God, we made it." Just as I said that I noticed what was ahead: "Oh my God, there's a parade."

I was in a small New Hampshire town called Wakefield and they were having their annual Memorial Day Parade; and I was headed right for it. Luckily there was a police officer there. He saw me coming and got the people out of the way. I pulled up in front of the fire house. I opened the door. Lisa was hesitating; she was trying to take her pig. I yelled at her to get out and she did so immediately.

One must imagine the thoughts going through the minds of the firemen. The fire department was ready to enter the parade when they heard the woman honking her horn. The furthest thing from their minds was a fire.

I jumped from the truck and looked at the fire. The flames were ten feet in the air off the back of the truck. I turned to face the firemen. Two of them were standing there with their mouths open and one had his hands outstretched. They appeared to be in a state of shock and disbelief, unable to move. I wanted to yell, "put out the fire," but all that came from my mouth was "Hose, hose!"

I saw a fire hose laying on the ground. I picked it up and went to look for a fire hydrant. I shouted, "hydrant, hydrant," all the while feeling silly for not being able to speak. A bystander began to shout right along with me, "Hydrant, hydrant!" If I wasn't so desperate to get the fire out I would have cracked up laughing.

Suddenly, five or six firemen were putting the fire out with foam from several canisters. Pulling most of the smoldering items off the truck,

they again dowsed everything with water. What seemed to be the longest and most frightening experience of my life was quickly cured by a group of well-trained firemen who knew exactly what to do.

All of my daughter's belongings lay in charred ruin. The mattress was no longer there and the only thing remaining of the box spring was the metal springs. My daughter sat on the ground and cried. I tried to console her, but truthfully I wasn't very sincere. I was so relieved the truck didn't blow up and I was just so glad of the final outcome, I found myself laughing. I know if that man and woman hadn't led my way to the fire department, the truck and all its belongings would have been gone; maybe someone would have been hurt.

The firemen took most of the burnt items off the truck but I had to drive back to Bartlett with the remainder. I'm very glad this never happened in my own town because I would be reminded of this incident every day for years to come.

Before I left, one of the firemen told me about his thoughts during all this. He said, "We were scheduled to let all the floats go first and we were to be the last ones in the parade. When we heard the woman honking her horn, I looked up, and before your truck was in sight we could see the flames. I shouted 'wait, there's another float.' I thought you were the Statue of Liberty."

Many bystanders gathered and began to joke and laugh about the whole affair and mentioning the parade should start over again. They seemed to be a very congenial group who didn't mind that I ruined their parade. One fireman said, "Wakefield Fire Department doesn't have to go to a fire, the fire comes to us."

Elaine McManus is a farmer and a beginning writer in Bartlett, New Hampshire.



Goings On

New England New Vaudeville. LPL Plus APL, Sat. May 4, Schaeffer Theatre, Bates College, Lewiston, Me., 8 p.m. Call 782-7228 for reserved seating & info. The best in family entertainment, including Jud the Jester, Buckfield Leather 'n Lather (pictured) and Lee Faulkner. \$4.00 adult, \$2.50 student.

Joan Whitney Payson Gallery, Westbrook College, Portland, Maine. Through May 19, *Women Pioneers in Maine Art 1900-1940.* Work by Georgia O'Keeffe, Marguerite Zorach, Dahlov Ipcar, Edith Cleaves Barry, among others. June 1 - summer 1985, *The Joan Whitney Payson Collection* including Chagall, Picasso, Homer, Courbet, Reynolds, Sargent, Whistler, Wyeth & others. Group tours by trained docents available. Gallery hrs. Tues.-Fri. 10-4, Sat. & Sun. 1-5. Closed Mon. & holidays. Free admission. (Arrange tours two weeks in advance, 207/797-9546.)

Hupper Gallery, Hebron Academy. May 9, *Phoebe Flewelling*, soprano performing Mozart's "The Magic Flute" on "Shoestring Opera." Atwood Hall Music Center, 7:30 p.m. May 10, *5th Annual Arts Festival* featuring drama, mime, dance. Student art show will continue until June 1.

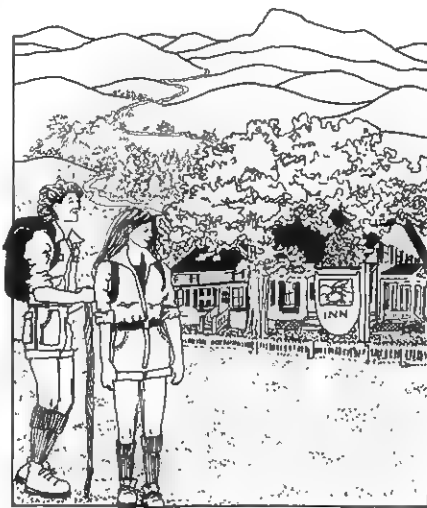
Kaleidoscope '85, Second Annual Children's Arts Festival of crafts, performances & hands-on activities for

whole family. Sat. June 1, 10-4, Jewett Hall, University of Maine at Augusta. Admission charged.

Portland Museum of Art, Marsden Hartley exhibit through May 5th.

Oxford Plains Speedway opens April 14. The May schedule includes 2:00 p.m. races on Sun. May 5, May 12 & May 19. 7:30 p.m. races begin on Sat. night, May 25. This year's Oxford "250" Open Comp. will be Sun. July 7 at 5:00.

Beginning in May, **Vermont Hiking Holidays** is running 2, 3 and 5 day complete holiday packages, that include guided walks, lodging and meals in country inns, transportation between inns, and evening programs. Brochure available at P.O. Box 845, Waitsfield, VT 05673.



View Askew

by Robert Skoglund

NO TAXABLE INCOME

Several days after I'd reported my income for 1982, the IRS asked me to visit the local office for an audit. Before going to town I dressed in my least ragged overalls and put on my best patched boots in hopes of making a good impression.

Stepping into an IRS office for the first time is an adventure. Some claim the stomach sensations approximate those youngsters get the first two or three times they step up to the altar to get married. I felt like I'd just discovered a puddle of oil beneath my car.

Way over in a dark corner three clerks were operating a huge press that was probably extracting blood from turnips. Several people were crying softly and the floor was littered with damp Kleenex.

When I introduced myself to a man behind one of the desks he looked me up and down, offered me a fresh Kleenex, and went to look for my folder. I noticed a little sign on his desk that said "Abandon Hope All Ye Who Enter Here."

"Mr. Skoglund," he began as he returned to his desk. "You report an income of only \$200 for 1982. I'd like to know how you managed to survive."

"Things are cheap down where I live," I replied. "I had a two-pound steak last night. Got it for a 1946 dime. A 1963 dime buys five gallons

of gas. It's advertised right on the front of the pumps."

"But how did you pay your telephone and electric bills?"

"Oh, my neighbor pays mine. I give him four old quarters every month and he takes care of it for me."

"The IRS man thought about that for a while. 'Why not?' he said, half to himself. 'I've worked here for 26 years and no one has told me a wrongie yet—but where did you get those old dimes and quarters?'"

"I worked for them," I said. "I get 40 cents an hour for cutting horrid ugly bushes with the brushhog on my big tractor. Payable in pre-1964 silver coins, of course. And everyone

down home has an old sock or a coffee can full of them. Paper money is worthless. Nobody will take it any more—except you folks here at the IRS."

Several people who had overheard our conversation started to cry a little louder.

"You had me fooled, Mr. Skoglund," said my IRS friend as he stood up and extended his hand. "I mean about how you could live on \$200 a year. Frankly, when I saw the way you were dressed when you walked in here, I thought I'd already figured out how you did it."

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HE LOOKED ME UP AND DOWN, OFFERED ME A FRESH KLEENEX, AND WENT TO LOOK FOR MY FOLDER.

Notes From Brookfield Farm

by Jack C. Barnes

MAY

I often look upon Brookfield Farm as a series of amendments. In recent years I have added considerable acreage to the original fifteen (more or less) acres that I purchased around 1960. For several years I tilled the fertile, almost stone-free alluvial soil that parallels a section of Hancock Brook thereby supplying summer residents from Barker Pond to the west shores of Sebago Lake with a wide variety of fresh vegetables. Of course, I had to attach a name to the strip of land as a means of identification. Surely such a picturesque piece of property deserved a poetical title, but somehow it quickly became known simply as "The Field." It was

not until 1974 that "The Field" was appropriately renamed Brookfield. Today, I commonly refer to this original tract as "The Intervale" to distinguish it from other sections which make up our farm.

When I later moved to a hundred-and-fifty-acre farm in Sebago, "The Field" contributed to the annual harvest of hay to feed our horses, sheep, and small herd of Herefords. Our favorite waterholes, which my two sons and I created from damming the brook annually with rocks gathered from the bed of the stream, were delightful spots to dive into during and after a long day of haying under a hot summer sun.

We became deeply attached to the verdant meadow, the serpentine brook, and the cool woods beyond. Even with the farm in Sebago four miles as the crow flies down the road, we never considered selling this place. On the other hand, however, there did not seem to be any

logical reason to acquire more land around it. Fifteen acres on top of what we owned in Sebago were sufficient acreage for what we wanted to do. If anything, we needed more cleared land, but certainly any additional woodland several miles from the farm seemed superfluous and impractical.

My marriage in 1978, the purchase of the farm house above The Intervale, our decision to raise sheep, and a growing concern that our tranquil, bucolic postage-stamp world—resembling Thomas Hardy's setting for *Far From the Madding Crowd*—was in danger of becoming destroyed have motivated us to acquire whatever land that could be purchased. Our most recent acquisition is a twenty-acre tract that extends almost to the outskirts of the

Lilacs — Photo by Dodo Knight



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village—a long, narrow strip that was so beautiful before its previous owner decimated the forest. Now only scattered small trees struggle to survive. How I weep for the carnage and the blite which man and his monstrous machine have cast over the land!

In the process of trekking over the lot to survey the damage and ascertain what can be salvaged, I have discovered strands of rusty barbed wire and an occasional lichen-covered fence post, indications that the land had been cleared of its primeval forests years ago by either old Fred Stanton (in whose house we are now living) or his forebears. There are still traces of worn paths where his Red Durhams traversed the land, cropping slowly as they went or hastening to the gate at his call. Old age found its inevitable way to Fred Stanton's doorstep; the difficult decision was made to cut down on his stock and later to cease farming altogether. I am certain that he was saddened by having to stand helplessly by and watch the trees creep

quickly and silently into his pastures. But certain I am that, if he could trod this earth again, he would be dismayed at seeing such utter devastation. I think that the knowledge that another parcel of his land has at long last been restored to the original farm would in part assuage his pain.

At any length, when one local septuagenarian who recalls when Fred farmed the land hereabouts heard that I had acquired Fred's back pasture, he promptly made one of his dooryard calls.

"I heah ya bought that back wood lot t'othah day. T'ain't good fah much aftah them loggahs got done with it. Why, I doubt s'if termites can find much ter chaw on out theah now. What'cha tend on doin' with it?"

"I guess I'll make it a part of a wildlife sanctuary," I responded.

The furrows on his weathered forehead deepened considerably as he puffed away on his pipe with zest. Finally he took the pipe out of his

mouth, knocked the ashes out of the bowl against a rail fence post and muttered, "O ayah, well, I got to be gotten' along."

Turning the area into a wildlife refuge or sanctuary posed an immediate problem for me. In order to protect the wildlife, I would have to post the land, of course. Now, I am reluctant to put up "No Trespassing" or "No Hunting" signs. There is something terribly hostile about such notices. I do not mind sharing land on which I pay taxes with anyone who enjoys taking walks, cross-country skiing, observing the birds, or gathering a bouquet of wild flowers. After all, I have spent many delightful hours hiking over old fields, pastures, and woods that belonged to someone who chose to remain anonymous and gave little thought to trespassers. As he has so many times in his life, my cousin Dr. Barnes helped me out of my quandary by giving me a number of yellow Maine Wildlife Management signs that he had left over from posting his thousand acres or more.

There were not nearly enough to extend at regular intervals completely around my land, but at least I was able to post the area along the brook where the beaver work and some of the uplands that are the favorite haunts of the beleaguered deer. My efforts were rewarded, for the big buck and the two does that roamed old Fred Stanton's back pasture survived the hunting season and the hazards of a long winter.

It is not often that I can spare the luxury of a perambulation over my lands on a May morning, for this is the month when farming gets into full swing here in the North Country; but I was lured by the call of a black-throated green warbler. It serenaded me from the summit of a dis-





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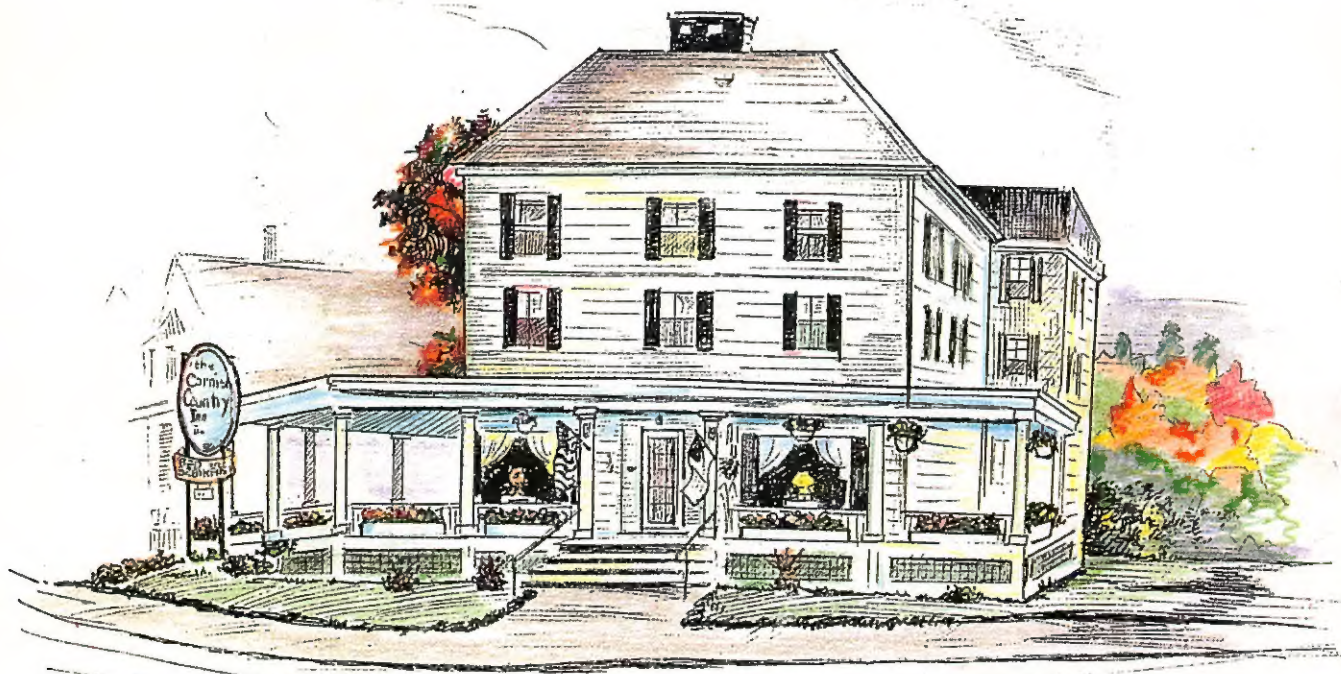
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